

# THE MUSICAL TIMES

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## MORNING POST.

In the first, "To Women," the soloist is a tenor, and is used chiefly to point the work of the choir. This is cast in purely vocal style, which, as the composer has already shown in his part-songs, is individual and notably expressive. The second, "For the Fallen," is more extended in style and forms a Requiem such as may well be adopted as our own, to be performed on all suitable occasions. The feeling revealed is very sincere, and in the design there is musician-like resource and grasp of poignant effect, of which a most striking example is the utterance by the solo soprano of the phrase "We will remember them."

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The first, which is very short, expresses the sacrifice of the women most poignantly, the composer building up the vocal writing over one or two simple but striking phrases beautifully treated in the orchestra. The atmosphere of the music is remarkable, as is also that of the second poem, "For the Fallen," which is of larger dimensions, and might be described as a proud lament over the heroic dead. The miniature overture has a fine elegiac feeling, the chorus entering with a quiet theme of resignation, which rises up to a big climax for "the glory that shines upon our tears." The middle section, built upon a mystical march theme, pictures the men going out to the battle, this being succeeded by an apotheosis of much beauty, in which an exquisitely tender little phrase is prominent, the music towards the end broadening out into a climax of great emotional force, and then dying away peacefully.

## DAILY NEWS.

The almost devotional tenderness of the first is very characteristic of Elgar, and it has a long-drawn melody of haunting charm which bears his unmistakable hall-mark. In this chorus the emotions of the poet and composer move in a more or less restricted circle; the second has a wider range, and we are in touch with the world of secular things. Towards the middle there is an exciting quick march, but the passage on which the memory will dwell most lovingly is the climax, a noble utterance of faith and confidence without bluster or self-glorification.

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The first, "To Women," is a dignified utterance laid out for choir and tenor solo, but, fine as it was, it did not reach the overwhelming effect of the wonderful inspiration, "For the Fallen," which, at the end, will probably prove to be the greatest expression in music, attributable to the call of the hour, given by any composer of any nation.

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## BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST.

The "To Women" is very short but poignant. In the middle of it comes a remarkable passage descriptive of the "Hawks of War." The "For the Fallen" is as moving a piece of music as Elgar has ever given us—a work of passionate sincerity and beauty that is by turns touching, thrilling, and consoling. Into a short poem of eight stanzas he has packed not only great intensity, but an astonishing variety of expression. The emotional basis of the music is proudly elegiac, with moments of soaring rapture. The climax is a magnificent outburst. Technically both works are of the rarest quality. It takes a lifetime of incessant practice to attain a touch at once so light and so sure as this. Wherever we look—at the cunning, telling strokes in the orchestra, at the effective choral writing which crystallises the splendid technique—Elgar has made for himself in his part-songs, or at the wonderfully thrilling entries of the solo voice—we see the Master.

*The above works were fully analyzed (with Musical Illustrations) by Mr. Ernest Newman in the May "Musical Times."*

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# The Musical Times

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR.

JULY 1, 1916.

## THE SOCIETY OF ENGLISH SINGERS.

'We must begin, my dear Madam,' said Sir George Thrum, 'by unlearning all that Mr. Barowski (of whom I do not wish to speak with the slightest disrespect) has taught you!'—'The Ravenswing,' Chap. vii., by W. M. Thackeray.

'When they do agree . . . their unanimity is wonderful.'—'The Critic,' Act ii., Scene 2.

The perennial controversies over ways and means of educating singers for a public career have recently assumed a new and interesting phase. Instead of our having to endure the screeds of infallible teachers on the sins of other teachers, an attitude summed up in the first quotation given above, we are invited to consider a statement of far-reaching and comprehensive points of agreement arrived at by a group of well-known professors and performers. How this notable and almost incredible result has been achieved is set out below.

Most of the controversial problems of a singer's training are physiological and technical. Interpretation, the ultimate objective and the supreme test, is a psychological manifestation about which we can agree to differ without serious disadvantage to anyone concerned. But as Technique, in which is included all that is meant by voice-production, 'diction' (*alias* enunciation), and perfect control of means, must obviously be founded upon positive physiological data, it would seem to be a reasonable expectation that with all the experience derived from the study of the achievements of great singers and the investigations of vocal physiologists, it would before now have been found possible to formulate definite courses that would meet every individual difficulty. But unfortunately, as we all know too well, this desirable result has not been reached, and we are constantly being disturbed by statements that methods of training in vogue ruin more voices than they conserve and develop. This being so, we are bound to give sympathetic attention to a scheme designed to deal with the whole business and brought forward under auspices that command respect.

It may seem that the proposals advocated imply indirectly a censorious attitude to the work of the great schools of music. But we do not believe this feeling animates the promoters. It is rather that they patriotically desire to see the schools take a strong line that may place them in the front rank of the singing schools of the world, and draw into their walls even more than they do at present the highest budding vocal talent of the whole Empire. Some of the signatories to the manifesto we give below are

distinguished products of the chief institutions in London, and it may be thought that as their successful careers exemplify the efficiency of their *Alma Mater* the new propaganda is uncalled for. Even Sir Thomas Beecham, who has expressed in public dissatisfaction with the output of the schools, in the light of the experience of his recent bold and successful opera seasons, in which British singers have shown outstanding ability, must feel that he shot his arrow too far. His opera companies have not suddenly learned all they know. All this, however, is by the way. What is clear is that the well-known artists associated with the proposed scheme, and who are at the top of the tree, are altruistically anxious that the path of their successors, which at best must be difficult, shall be made as straight and smooth as possible. Whether under existing circumstances, or at all, the scheme is practicable, is fair matter for comment. Before saying more we now give the views of the promoters of the new Society.

### RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF SINGERS.

There is unanimous agreement among members of this Society that the present system of education offered in our institutions to those who wish to become singers is inadequate and on unsatisfactory lines.

Owing to the great changes now taking place on all sides, it is regarded as opportune to suggest that if a true English school of singing is to be established, the time is favourable for a complete revision of the conditions under which singers are trained in this country. Therefore the Society sets forth the following criticisms upon the existing conditions, and suggests what it holds to be a comprehensive system of teaching.

#### 1.—Insufficient technical training and supervision.

The present system of half-an-hour or twenty minutes twice a week is wrong in principle. The number and duration of lessons should be elastic, and regulated according to individual needs. Beginners require daily supervision, either individually or in classes, in the technical study of vocalizing and diction, and proficiency in these should be secured before attempting more advanced work.

The period of study should be capable of being extended to five years.

#### 2.—Absence of any general principle co-ordinating the whole training.

The subjects: Technique of vocalizing and diction, study of musical works, sight-singing and interpretation, should be taught upon common principles and a progressive system.

#### 3.—Absence of Ensemble Classes for solo singers.

Ensemble work is as essential a part of the training of a singer as it is of an instrumentalist.

#### 4.—The 'single teacher' system.

Each department should be in the hands of the teacher or teachers specially qualified for it. The students should be pupils of the Institution and not of particular members of the Staff. It is inadvisable that any pupil should be trained in all the various branches by a single teacher.

#### 5.—The physical side of training.

The career of a singer depends upon his physical well-being for its success. In the interests of the development of his physical powers, such theoretical studies as Harmony and Counterpoint should not be made compulsory.

#### 6.—Neglect of the English Language.

The first duty of every English singer is to sing his own language perfectly. To this end the English language should form the basis of his training.

The Society wishes to urge the adoption of a system under which the singing school is to constitute a separate department, supervised by a person specially acquainted with the art of singing and its requirements, and conducted by a body of teachers, each of whom teaches his own subject or subjects in agreement with his colleagues.

The pupils should receive technical instruction in vocalizing and diction under the daily supervision of their teachers in the early stages, and be passed on to the higher branches when they have acquired proficiency in technique. They should study singing side by side with the proper declamation of the English language; together with sight-singing, ensemble singing, repertoire, memorising, and pianoforte accompanying.

To these subjects should be added dancing, fencing, and stage technique for those who intend to follow an operatic career.

The student will thus be enabled to take his place fully equipped on the concert platform or the stage.

There should be such an entrance examination as will ensure a definite standard of ability and intelligence in every pupil.

Lectures and demonstrations should be given which the whole school should be required to attend.

We are convinced that the future of English singing depends upon the adoption of these principles.

Frederic Austin.	Gregory Hast.
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Allen Gill.	Charles Villiers Stanford
H. Plunket Greene.	( <i>President</i> ).
Francis Harford.	*W.A. Aikin ( <i>Act. Hon.-Sec.</i> ).

The following are extracts from a paper read by Mr. Walter Ford at one of the Society's gatherings:

We have thrashed out the main problems of the voice. What is more important, we have on every fundamental point arrived at definite conclusions that rest on sound physiological truth. For us at any rate nebulous theory exists no more. We believe that the hope for the future of our art in this country lies in the acceptance of these conclusions. But they must be translated into palpable facts and their fruits made manifest before they will be generally accepted.

The question before us is whether the conditions under which singing is taught to-day give us a fair chance. There is no doubt that in any case the teaching of singing is an extraordinarily difficult business. The detail into which we have been obliged to go in dealing with such apparently simple things as the open throat, the loose jaw, the forward tongue, the processes of breathing, sufficiently indicates this: resonance, the whispered vowels, attack, legato singing, vocalisation, we should expect to give trouble; further, there is the whole subject of diction; and,

finally, sight-singing, phrasing, interpretation in song, opera and concerted singing have to be provided for. I want you to realise not only the extent of what a singer has to learn, but also how very new and bewildering to the vast majority of pupils the early stages in voice-training are, not necessarily because pupils are stupid, but because having used their voices from childhood instinctively and without thought, and without observing at all the nature of the sounds they make, they have to acquire an entirely new mental attitude.

This is much more difficult with regard to a familiar thing like speaking or singing than in the case of something quite new, like typewriting or many games of skill. The acquisition of the power of attentive listening to, controlling and mentally registering the sound of one's own voice takes a long time, requiring perpetual alertness and concentration of mind, and in the average singing student, as we know too well, these are not common qualities. But something more subtle is involved—I mean the power to recognise the delicate sensations which accompany self-created sounds—and yet, till these qualities and powers are developed, students cannot be expected to do much good by private practising.

In the early steps, then, too much supervision can hardly be given, even in the rare cases of those whose minds have succeeded in grasping the problems with which they have to deal. Remember, further, that the voice is out of sight and impalpable; it is not an external, steadfast instrument, but part and parcel of ourselves; every part of it can move and shift to a wrong position. Then, it is sensitive to every change in our health, our spirits, our feelings, our nerves; and these upset it as surely as bad habits, wrong treatment, and faulty principles.

Singers are the only musical performers who perform upon themselves, so that teachers of singing have the incalculable personal equation to deal with in a peculiarly heightened form.

Lastly, the instrument of voice is liable to remain delicate for a long time, and is only capable, even when rightly used, of a strictly limited amount of daily singing work. M. Garcia, who in the first edition of his work fixed this limit for trained voices at two hours a day, reduced it in his later edition to an hour and a-half. The temptation to do too much, especially when things are going well, is very great; young students need to be protected against this.

It should be clear, then, that the preliminary work of laying a secure foundation is of an importance which could not be exaggerated. Mr. Sims Reeves told me that he studied for three years in England, then sang for a year or two in provincial concerts, then went to Italy for further study, and remained there under the same master for four years, 'till he could do whatever he liked with every note of his voice.'

I would remind you that to-day the majority of voices that come to us for training come more or less damaged, or in more or less unnatural conditions from bad teaching or bad habits. The late H. C. Deacon used to say that, owing to the slovenly way in which English was spoken, it took an English singer two years to arrive at the point from which an Italian started. For some time most of our pupils' voices have to be treated as 'ground under repair.' Till things are changed, our training schools must be hospitals as well.

Now, under infinitely more favourable conditions in the palmy days of the old Italian schools, when the motto was 'only the specially strong and the specially gifted need apply,' seven years was recognized as the proper term of apprenticeship.

\* Dr. W. A. Aikin is an eminent member of the medical profession, who has specialised on vocal physiology. His book 'The Voice,' published (1910) by Longmans, gives his views on the technique of voice-production and English diction. He acts temporarily as secretary in the place of Mr. Frederick Keel, who is interned in Germany.



Since then the singer's repertory has largely increased. He is required to know two or three foreign languages (probably after the war Russian will be added), the music he has to perform is not exclusively composed from the vocal standpoint, modern declamation is almost a study in itself, halls are vaster, orchestras larger and less merciful, life is in every way more strenuous, and yet the time of training has been decreased by three or four years! Can a single musical institution be named that offers a scholarship for even five years, or by any sign indicates that it is impossible to turn out a complete singer in two or three?

It will take much time and fighting to destroy the deep-rooted illusions of the public on this subject. It might be expected that as the period of training has been curtailed supervision would have been increased, but this is not so. The rule from the beginning to the end of a course is two lessons a week each of half-an-hour's duration, or even less.

Of course it is the technical work that suffers. Literally, in any serious sense there is no time for it; at any rate, no time to supervise it. Pupils are left to practise their scales, arpeggios, and passages as best they may. Their practising, from the technical point of view, often does more harm than good. True, the vocal technique of earlier days finds little place in modern compositions. But though scales, &c., are not nowadays often performed in public, they are just as necessary in order to make voices strong, even, supple, and beautiful.

A disadvantage of the present system is that one teacher has to take his pupils through the whole business, though his special gifts may lie only in one or two branches. A man with a special gift for interpretation is wasted if he has to teach the elements of vocal technique. A good teacher of vocal technique may be quite incompetent to deal with matters of style and taste. But no co-ordination is possible without uniformity of fundamental principles among the staff.

Again, there are usually classes for the study of French, German, and Italian. Are there usually classes for the study of English? Such are sorely needed. Teachers of the higher branches of singing ought not to have to spend half their time over the very elements of English diction. I wish I could say that the elocution classes saved them from this burden.

At every point it is lack of time that hampers us. We do, not the best we can or the best we know, but just what is possible under the circumstances.

It is painfully easy to lower one's standard. Not to do so is to find oneself up against an atmosphere which is antagonistic to serious technical work. What every student is not called upon to do is apt to be resented or thought unnecessary. The singing elements of to-day emphatically rebel against the discipline of technique. They expect to be excused the drudgery which is taken as a matter of course by every other branch of the musical profession.

It is sad to think, too, of the thousands of half-trained, inexperienced students to whom these conditions have become a tradition, and who set up as private teachers and give lessons in hundreds of schools throughout the Empire.

There is one special absurdity which comes to my mind. We once discussed the question of registers. As to their existence opinion was divided, and there was a decided unbelieving majority, but we were unanimously of opinion that whether they existed or not, they should not be mentioned to pupils. Yet is there a Syllabus of any College or Examination Board that does not give singing candidates marks for the

'blending of the registers'? Teachers therefore hunt for them conscientiously, and if they cannot find them, proceed to create them, or there would be nothing to blend, and how would their pupils then fare at the hands of the London Examiners?

Another grievous result of the present conditions is that students are not taken through a systematic course step by step, but try to learn everything at once—diction, vocal technique, sight-singing, choral-singing, songs of every age and clime and style, oratorio and opera, almost from start to finish. Only the very strong or exceptionally gifted come through. Most of our students are doing work years in advance of their vocal and physical powers. It is not surprising that a campaign conducted in such a haphazard manner should show a long list of casualties.

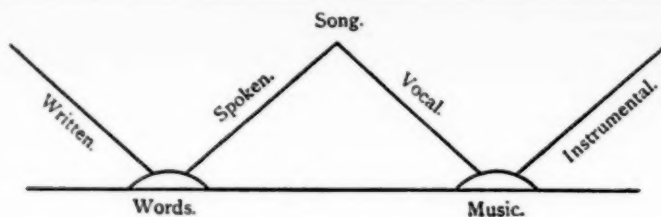
I will only add a word or two as to the lamentable tone of public taste with regard to singing, which is the direct and natural outcome of the present state of things. In no other branch of music is it possible to succeed with so little acquired skill. If a voice is only large enough and the possessor of it has some temperament, it may scoop, it may wobble, may stray from the pitch, may force to its heart's content, and no one will care. And yet there are more singers, more fine voices, more musical intelligence, than at any previous time. Not a doubt of it. But we are like the censors, we are afraid the public won't stand the truth, that there would be no students if they knew the work they had to face and the time and expense involved.

Whether this is so or not let us give singers a chance. They know pretty well what time it takes to succeed as a pianist or violinist, yet a good number of students aspire to fame as exponents of these instruments. A little reflection, a little exercise of British common-sense, will show them, if we give them the lead, that the more difficult work of a singer cannot be accomplished satisfactorily without a corresponding amount of labour and self-sacrifice.

At a recent meeting of the Society there was a discussion of the question 'What exactly is the agreement upon which an English School of Singing can be based?' Mr. FREDERIC AUSTIN said there was abundant evidence that agreement was possible both on the broad lines of a singer's education and on the principles of voice-training, and it was time these were formulated. The Society was in a position to see to this. If a small primer enunciating elementary principles and their practical application could be published at the modest price of a few pence it would supply a want. In London there was a large choice of teachers, but in the provinces the organist or other general musician in the locality was often obliged for his living to teach singing although he had little knowledge of even the rudiments of the subject.

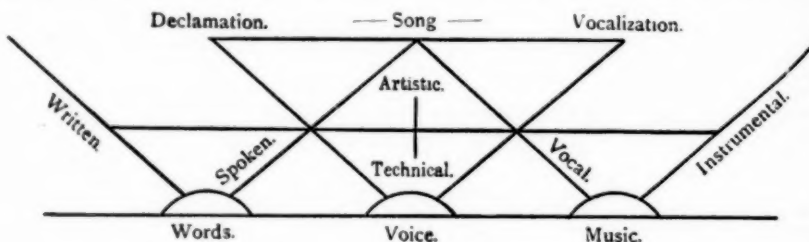
Dr. AIKIN said he did not think that the task would be very difficult, but he would like to define beforehand exactly the scope which should be allotted to a purely technical vocal primer.

By means of a diagram he explained that arising from a base line or horizon representing Humanity were two great arts of expression: Words and Music. Each of these he divided into two categories, represented by two rays or lines diverging like a V. Words were either written or spoken, and music was either vocal or instrumental. Arising from separate arts the spoken word and vocal music came together and culminated in the art of Song. Written words pursued an independent course away from music, and Instrumental Music was similarly free from words in a direction of its own:



Dr. Aikin continued: But the writing of words by the poet and the composing to them of vocal music by the musician does not provide for the human performance of singing. This is the product of individual development, the Voice, and is governed entirely by psychological and physiological principles.

The power of making sound and lending it to the two arts of Words and Music is also expressed by two diverging lines. One line meets the spoken word and is prolonged to the completion of speech; the other meets the vocal music and is prolonged to the perfection of pure vocalization:



Whether or not the whole range of the art of song extends from pure vocalization to pure declamation is not under discussion, but the full development of the voice is thus outlined; and individual expression, arising from the human imagination, may find itself in the pure declamation of words or in the instrumental vocalization of music, one leaning more to the intellect and the other to the emotions. But the centre of the art is found in that happy union in which words and music, intellect and emotion, are more easily brought together in perfect balance. It requires the complete fusion of both faculties of the voice to exercise the power of words and the appeal of music simultaneously.

By drawing another horizontal line through the points where the voice meets both words and music, an indication is given of the technical development of all these factors in their early stages, in preparation for a higher artistic development in which the imagination is given its materials to work with.

What is thus shown as the lower 'triangle' of the Voice, is the scope of elementary technical training, exactly analogous to the study of music in preparation for composition, and the study of language and literature in preparation for writing.

Within this region the Psychological and Physiological functions of the normally healthy individual have to be trained. The process is not a very complicated one, but full of detail.

It is designed to develop:

1. Breath control.
2. Ear, for pitch and quality of sound.
3. Well-formed resonator and power to expand it.
4. Free and well-practised organs of articulation.

To these are to be added knowledge of music and its expression, and knowledge of language, its pronunciation and declamation. The artistic sense—i.e., the sense by which the imagination can express itself in the voice—brings then this equipment into the higher region where the singer goes onward confidently, with musician and poet on either hand, to justify his own existence.

Dr. Aikin concluded by delivering a kind of Psalm entitled 'Carmen Vocis,' which he offered as an 'act of devotion' to all who aspired to become singers:

*Dedicated to the Society of English Singers.*

CARMEN VOCIS.

My Soul is in my Breath; and with my Breath will I lift up my Voice in Speech and Song.

For my breath shall be turned into Sound; and I will pour forth my Voice, even from the depths of my lungs.

And the Sound shall be made true and steadfast; by the security of my Breath and the watchfulness of my sense that heareth from within.

My neck shall be as a temple around the sound; and its spaces shall expand to adorn every cadence with fullness of tone.

The inner portal shall be open wide; for in my throat there shall be no manner of contraction.

About the outer gate my lips and jaw and tongue shall play with all the supple freedom of a graceful dance; and bring to life the beauties of my native speech.

Thus will I sing with my Breath as with my Soul; and speak with my mind the simple language of my life.

For I am in my Breath and in my Voice; and all my countrymen will hear me and understand.

At the thirty-seventh meeting of the Society, held at the Hotel Great Central on June 5, musical critics of the Metropolitan Press were invited to hear the ideas of the Society explained. Sir Charles Stanford presided.

Mr. PLUNKET GREENE first related some of the early experiences which led to his entering the singing profession; how he was advised to take an Italian name and look forward to a great operatic career as 'Signor Verdi'; and how he was sent to Germany to study, and remained there as a student for two years, after which he went to Italy and came back after six months without having learnt anything. An English teacher in London to whom he was sent proved also

useless. He then went to Alfred Blume, and learned everything from him; except of course the English language, which he had to work out for himself while still labouring under the idea that great tone necessitated the demoralisation of words. He recalled Mr. Dooley's comment on the music of Richard Strauss: 'You can't sing it, but you can cough it.' A singer with a feeling for words had somewhat similar sensations when he heard the prostitution of the English language which prevailed at that time, and was even considered the right thing.

He then related how Dr. William Aikin, who had often discussed with him the parlous state of affairs with regard to the singing of English, came to him a few years ago and suggested the starting of the Society with three great objects in view:

1. To bring singing teachers and others interested in singing together for the exchange of ideas and experiences.
2. Thereby to arrive at the truth of common principles.
3. To raise an English School of Singing founded on the English language, capable of appealing through words as well as music.

The Society had worked steadily for four years. It comprised not only singers and singing teachers, but others who with their knowledge were able to throw light upon the subject. He mentioned especially Dr. Mott and his high position in the medical world, who was constantly at the meetings, explaining to them the psychological and physiological matters that were so important in the development of singers. He referred also to others who, though not engaged in the singing profession, gave assistance to the Society by their special knowledge from other points of view. There were also composers and singers of great variety.

The Society met once a month (except in vacation time), discussing thoroughly subjects in connection with the advancement of English singing. The discussions had been almost entirely on purely technical questions, and he thought that the improvement which had taken place in English pronunciation in the English opera, and the trouble singers were taking to raise the standard, were in great measure due to the influence of the Society's members. But one great result of the discussions was that they were now in a position to state more or less definitely how they proposed to found a School of English Singing upon the basis of the English language.

He enumerated a long list of the objects which the Society had in view:

1. To gather all that was known and understood, physiological and psychological, for the promotion of the art.
2. To prove that an English basis was right for English singing and not a foreign one.
3. To insist that the English language forming the basis should be in its finest form.
4. To establish uniformity in teaching.
5. To insist upon composers studying the need of a fine English text.
6. To revise translations.
7. To further English opera.
8. To establish an authority above commercialism.
9. To use their influence in favour of English singing.

Among these he especially pointed to the following:

1. As regards foreign teachers, they had no idea of engaging in an anti-foreign movement. None owed more to foreign teachers than he did,—and he specially mentioned Alfred Blume and Francis Korbay,—nor had better friends among them. Their object was only to show that they had in their own hands a system of national teaching of which the English language was to be the very foundation.
2. Uniformity of teaching would be attempted as far as possible, and with that in view it was intended to issue an elementary primer which would go through the process of careful examination and revision by the Society.
3. The English opera they had very much at heart. Equipment for that was always one of their leading objects, and they had very ambitious views on the subject.
4. They hoped also to be able to bring influence to bear upon the subject of the better education of English singers.

With all these in view they had decided that the present time was opportune to suggest a complete revision of the system of existing institutions. They were undoubtedly on the edge of a new era in many respects, and especially in the art of music. Their action had taken the form of a printed circular of 'Recommendations.' This circular had been sent to all the leading musical institutions in England and the Colonies, and they had already had encouraging indications from some of these in the shape of inquiries. They could give an assurance of most loyal support to institutions who saw their way to make any of the reforms advocated. So far as they could judge, the necessity of founding a school of their own upon the principles laid down would probably not arise.

They had asked the Press to come and hear the result of their four years' hard work, and were inviting its help. He felt a great hope that if the Press approved and joined in the movement, that evening might be a turning-point for the whole art of singing in England.

Mr. WALTER FORD explained the printed 'Recommendations,' re-stating many of the arguments of his paper (which is given above), upon which the document had been framed. He concluded by saying that the suggestions were idealistic, as all suggestions should be, but they were not Utopian or impracticable. They would be found practical, even if they required alteration in the whole system of teaching. Moreover, they would pay. There had never been a truly English school of singing in this country, and its benefits would soon arouse public appreciation.

Mr. BEN DAVIES spoke for the good feeling that had invariably ruled in the Society, and he felt that it had certainly strengthened good-fellowship among English singers. It had opened their minds to the betterment of their art. A feeling that something was wrong with the present system had prevailed for a long time. What was to account for the number of promising pupils who failed altogether? How was it possible that humbugs and charlatans advertising 'the perfect singer in six months' could impose upon so many people? He felt strongly that nobody should be allowed to teach without proper qualifications.

In their Society they were always meeting with new ideas and new things to learn and practise. His own early difficulties had given him experience of the utility of the foreign teaching of English oratorio.

Mr. GILBERT WEBB, as a member of the Press present, responded cordially to the invitation of the Society to further the cause of an English school of singing. He had taken the greatest interest in singing for many years, and as a reviewer had collated most of the works on the subject, and was struck both by the earnestness of the writers and the contradictions of their various methods. Out of his long experience, he could say that good English singing was certainly exceptional. He regarded English as the most suitable language of any for opera. He felt sure the 'Recommendations' were on the right basis. Revision had become necessary in most of our systems of education, and the vocal art was in itself distinct and peculiar, and one of the most difficult to teach.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir Charles Stanford) said he strongly desired to do all in his power to support the 'Recommendations' of the Society. There were two or three points upon which he laid particular stress:

1. Elasticity in artistic training was essential. He felt that teachers should be free to discriminate in such a matter as the length and duration of lessons.
2. Interchange of masters, in composition as well as in singing. It was most desirable that in every institution pupils should be enlightened by different points of view. They knew that in some foreign schools technique, ensemble, and phrasing were in separate hands.
3. Another important point was the provision of a second study for students, for if an intended opera singer should fail in voice, his training ought to give him a good chance as an actor.

Public prejudice in England was hard to beat, and there was always a leaning towards the voice without regard to the brains behind it. For his own part he derived most pleasure from singing that was marked by intelligence rather than by vocal perfection. He also laid stress on ensemble singing.

Mr. H. COLLES said that although he preferred to express himself with the pen, he would like to thank the Society for an instructive evening in which he had learnt much. He saw in the programme of the Society two main problems: The reform of institutions, and the bringing into line individual methods. Interchange of pupils would come about more easily when common principles had taken root, and he was assured that these common principles had now been reached by the Society. But there were many things before them difficult to break down: not only stone walls, but sandbag barricades. He was sure that all his colleagues would be in sympathy with the ideals of the Society.

Dr. McNAUGHT said he would do all he could to promulgate the views of the Society. The changes suggested were great, but they might in time be carried out.

Dr. MOTT drew a parallel between musical and medical education. The old system of teaching had long since given way to division into departments, and he thought that in singing as in everything else the proper distribution of the subjects was essential. He said that he had learnt much from the meetings of the Society.

Dr. PERCY BUCK said that it was a strange thing that almost every organist was expected to be able to train singers. He and other organ students, during their training, had attempted to take up singing as a second study, but it was a failure because what they wanted to know, the technics of singing, was unobtainable. The singing-masters either could not, or would not, teach them that. So they gave it up. He thought that delegation of the primary technique to teachers who understood it, was one of the needs of

vocal education. There was a rooted inefficiency with regard to technics among English teachers. The physiological and psychological authorities in the Society had always been ready to explain and suggest what might be helpful in practice, and what impressed him most was the impersonal and unselfish earnestness of the discussions.

Is it a practicable scheme, and is the present moment an opportune one for its public discussion? These and numerous other questions and doubts arise in the mind of anyone making the acquaintance of the manifesto and its explanatory amplification for the first time. It is fair to presume that during the four years of the evolution of the Society many such questions have been probed and objections satisfactorily met. Does the particular method of the promotion of the scheme give due or any credit to the Schools for what they have accomplished under existing and not very favourable conditions for the pursuit of artistic ideals? The best work of the Schools has not been achieved merely by two half-hour lessons a week. Verdi's 'Falstaff,' which not long ago was so admirably given by the R.C.M. students, was not prepared on this starvation allowance. This performance, and other similar undertakings of the R.A.M., called for and obtained much close and sympathetic collaboration of the kind pleaded for by the Society. We mention all this in the hope that no prejudice may arise against the Schools on account of supposed slackness in developing their singers.

It will be observed that the reforms advocated do not demand a change of staff, but a change of system and a considerable expansion of the usual period of preparation. Here we are faced with the vital economic factor: What will it all cost, and where is the money to come from? The best students are often the most impecunious, and their concern is to earn rather than to spend. It would be well for the Society to investigate closely this aspect of its proposals, and to issue a statement.

The period of Scholarships, which is generally for only three years, is no obstacle to an expansion to five or more years if it is found desirable—because obviously it is always possible to renew them for students who emerge promisingly from the shorter period, instead of awarding them to new students. The difficulty of co-ordinating and unifying the work of a group of teachers should not be an insuperable one so long as the system which they have to develop is thoroughly mapped out and, of course, sincerely accepted by all concerned. There is much more to be said some other time on this and many other points.

It will be remarked that the membership (limited to sixty) of the Society is at present confined to the male sex. This does not imply any lack of appreciation of the value of the opinion of lady vocalists and teachers: in fact, ladies were invited to one of the first dinners, and their opinion sought. The suggestion is that they should form a separate society, and that occasional conferences of the two bodies should take place.



## THE ORGAN AS A SOLO INSTRUMENT.

BY BERNARD JOHNSON.

That the organ as a solo instrument for purely concert purposes has come to stay is an incontrovertible fact, however regrettable this may appear to those organists who hold the view that the organ should be regarded simply and solely as an aid to divine worship. One has only to look round at the number of large instruments which have been erected in concert halls during the last few years in order to realize how strong a hold the movement has succeeded in establishing in this country. To quote only the few organs upon which the writer has himself given opening recitals: Albert Hall, Nottingham; City Hall, Hull; Rochdale Town Hall; Victoria Hall, Sheffield; De Montfort Hall, Leicester; Usher Hall, Edinburgh, &c.; all of which have been opened during the last five years or so.

The list does not pretend to be in any way exhaustive.

It is probably safe to assert that every single concert-player in the country at present has been at some time or another a church organist. Many combine the two offices, so that the probabilities are that there is on the part of the concert-playing fraternity a profound sympathy with and understanding of the church-player's many trials and difficulties. But what of the reverse side of the picture? It is to be feared that many, if not most, church organists regard the concert-player as a trickster of the deepest dye—as a man who deliberately 'lowers the dignity of the instrument,' whatever that high-sounding phrase may mean; in short, as one for whom the chances of ultimate salvation are of the smallest. It is to correct that impression (formed, it is to be feared, by a course of regular non-attendance of concert recitals) that this article is written.

As a proof of this lack of sympathy with, and even understanding of, the position, let us first consider what happens when a concert appointment is to be made. The authorities of the town or city concerned call in the services of three or four of the heads of the profession—men whose names command universal respect as having attained fame in some one or more branches of the art, not necessarily in organ-playing. These eminent gentlemen proceed to draw up a scheme under which the competition shall be held and the award made. Here is a scheme which was actually adopted to decide the question of an important appointment which fell vacant a short time ago:

- (1) To arrange and play a classical overture;
- (2) To play two or three pieces of the candidate's own choice;
- (3) To improvise upon a given theme;
- (4) To read a passage of music at sight; and
- (5) To read from vocal score.

It is difficult to speak with respect of a scheme which, while admirable as a test of fitness to hold a church appointment, is quite unsuitable in the case of the concert-player. Its defects are twofold—those of omission and those of commission. Let us place them side by side and see how they look. The scheme applies no sort of test of a man's *répertoire*, its variety and extent (a most important point), but insists on skill in improvising (which is quite unessential). It makes no inquiry as to a candidate's power of drawing up an interesting programme having due regard to variety of tone- and key-colour, but it demands proficiency in reading at sight (which a concert-player ought never to have to do). It concerns itself not at all with the question of a man's

ability to write intelligent, grammatical, and illuminating notes on his pieces; but—he must be able to read from vocal score! Moreover, it should be borne in mind that in the case of filling such an appointment as I have in my mind, the probabilities are that when the preliminary process of weeding out has been performed, the candidates left in for the final test are men with some sort of a record of service or with some academic distinction to show, so that something more than a test of mere musicianship would seem to be required. If I am engaging a cook I should go for the person who could cook and serve a good dinner, not for the candidate who could juggle cleverly with the fire-irons. The presumption is, indeed, that the time spent in attaining and perfecting herself in this difficult art would prove to be so much time robbed from the adequate performance of those duties which she had undertaken to discharge.

Destructive criticism is of course the easiest thing in the world to accomplish, and therefore I venture to indicate the lines upon which a man with concert experience and sympathy would probably have worked had he been called in to advise: (1) To arrange and play a classical overture; (2) to submit beforehand, say, thirty programmes with analytical notes on the pieces; (3) to play three or four of those pieces, the choice to lie with the adjudicators, and their selection to have been notified to each candidate, say, twenty-four hours before the test took place. Thus the candidate would be tested in precisely those points on which his work would subsequently be judged in public—viz., the wideness and variety of his *répertoire*, his skill in performance, his power of drawing up an interesting, well-contrasted programme, and his skill in writing analytically.

If, then, the point may be regarded as established that there is need for a fuller appreciation of the concert-player's position on the part of the church organist, let us proceed to examine what are precisely his aims and objects.

## THE IDEAL ORGAN.

Without entering too closely into details, it may be stated broadly that an instrument of some sixty speaking stops, provided that tonal balance and colour be well thought out, should be sufficiently large for all practical requirements. Essential points are that there should be plenty of diapason tone (the characteristic organ tone), because: (1) The instrument will in all likelihood be required for use in combination with an orchestra on occasions; and (2) the ideal concert programme (of which more later) *must* always include specimens of the best polyphonic music, which is by no means the property only of the church player, and which demands diapason tone.

Great care should be taken in distributing the orchestral tone-colour as between the various manuals, so that wood-wind effects should be grouped on one, string effects on another, &c., instead of having the stops arranged haphazard. Extraordinary prejudices still exist in some quarters against the inclusion of sub- and super-octave couplers, against the balanced swell pedal, and against the employment of such orchestral devices as timpani, &c. Space does not permit of a full discussion of these interesting questions, but taking the three points in the order mentioned, I would merely say that sub- and super-octaves are *not* employed primarily to add to the ensemble in *forte* passages, but are of enormous help in orchestral transcriptions; that I have never yet heard an argument in favour of the barbarous old pump-handle swell as opposed to the balanced swell which could be regarded as at all convincing; and that on logical grounds, if you include the orchestral oboe, orchestral flute, &c., why bar the timpani? The argument that

instruments of percussion are capable of being put to vulgar use really does not apply, for there are players who use the piccolo vulgarly, and yet one finds the piccolo stop included even in the staidest specification.

#### ON PROGRAMMES.

It has been already stated that no concert programme can be considered completely good unless what is known as pure organ music be fully represented. This point should be insisted on because, if the polyphonic style be totally missing, a player loses an opportunity of securing what is the great desideratum in programme-building, viz., variety; and this quite apart from artistic considerations. But here is precisely where a concert programme has the advantage over a church recital programme—that a far wider field is open to the player from the very nature of the circumstances under which the music is heard. There is much excellent light music for the organ which can and should be played in concert halls, and it seems to me to be every bit as inartistic to confine oneself to any one style in a concert hall as it is for a church player to introduce light, secular music into a church programme. My quarrel would be just as sharp with a man who gave a programme consisting entirely of orchestral arrangements and 'pretties' as with one who fed his audience on a diet of Bach and Rheinberger undiluted. Not long ago I was present at a church organ opening, and listened to four Bach fugues in succession: a fifth was set down to follow, but I joined the stream of disappointed parishioners flowing westward. Turning to questions of key contrast, here is another example of how *not* to do things. A recent programme given by a recitalist of some considerable experience began as follows: Sonata in E<sup>2</sup> minor, Rheinberger; Allegretto in E<sup>2</sup>, Wolstenholme; 'St. Anne' Fugue, Bach. Here the items killed each other by reason of want of contrast as regards key. By the time the Bach Fugue was begun the ear was sick of the very sound of E<sup>2</sup>, with the result that the Fugue, though ably played, not only missed its effect, but became a veritable torture of monotony. The aim all along must be for variety: variety of tonal colour (how seldom does a player let us hear the diapasons on the Great Organ uncoupled!), variety in the treatment of the Pedal (there are players who never spare us the boom of the 16-ft. all through a programme), variety of style, key, speed, strength of tone, &c. It is only by taking most careful thought of all these considerations that a programme 'comes out' well. Although it does not exactly come within the scope of this article, it may perhaps be permissible to protest here against the growing practice on the part of our church organist brethren of trespassing upon our preserves by introducing much light music into their churches. Much of this music should surely never be heard within the four walls of a place of worship: it is avowedly secular.

#### ON 'ARRANGEMENTS.'

Here one is treading on highly controversial ground, but before coming to grips with the subject let me make good one broad argument if I can. An old and valued friend, a church organist and a purist in every sense, condemned arrangements root and branch in the course of a recent conversation. I asked him what music he used on the frequent occasions of marriages and deaths among his congregation: he was bound to admit that 'O rest in the Lord,' the two funeral and wedding marches, and the usual music trotted out on these occasions were every

one of them arrangements. So that the principle has long been admitted, and has indeed been carried into practice even among church organists. Upon what logical grounds, therefore, can the objection to arrangements rest—as such? The art of the modern builder has made possible a fairly adequate presentation of many great masterpieces which could not even have been attempted on the organ twenty years ago. Upon what grounds should the player refuse to follow where the builder leads? Let it not be thought that the contention is that an arrangement can be anything but, in fact, an arrangement: the very word implies compromise. But I do most emphatically contend that in the many towns and cities where the opportunity of hearing an orchestra occurs very seldom the city organ can become a great educational medium if used intelligently in this direction. At Nottingham we have gone even a step further: we are fortunate in having several very excellent concert pianoforte players here, and performances of no fewer than twelve of the great pianoforte concertos have been heard, the organ filling in the orchestral accompaniment. These works would never have been heard at all in their original form. It should be remembered too that, after all, the literature for the organ is extremely limited, and when a man has to play frequently in the same town, if all arrangements were to be eschewed he would be hard pressed for a repertoire. On the other hand, if an organist finds himself placed where frequent and regular orchestral performances are available, there is less reason to include arrangements in his programmes.

#### ON TRICKS.

No instrument lends itself more readily than does the organ, unfortunately, to cheap and vulgar effects. The perpetual use of the tremolo stop, startling dynamic changes, vulgar registering designed to catch momentary attention and applause—this is all stock-in-trade only too easy to acquire. With such things this article has nothing to do, inasmuch as one is pre-supposing all along that the 'man-at-the-wheel' is an artist and a serious musician. But certain little aids to good results are still looked at askance by many players. Such an one is the device known as 'thumbing.' In cases where this is designed to suggest, say, a passage on the horns, and if it can be done smoothly, what possible objection can there be to the use of the device? Like many other good things, it can easily be overdone, and a man's sense of the fitness of things and his good taste must be the final arbiter. My point is that if a legitimate effect is secured it is no trick: it only becomes so when it is employed for the sake of 'showing off'—an altogether contemptible thing. Broadly it may be stated that no device which secures the composer's intention can rightly be regarded as a trick. An instance of what I mean was rather strikingly illustrated the other day by the remark of a brother organist who plays upon a two-manual instrument, and who told me that he could not play the well-known Andantino of Lemare because the dulciana on his Great organ was too loud for an accompaniment to the oboe on the Swell. We were at the organ, and I was able to show him that the 4-ft. flute on the Great, which happened to be a very quiet one, played an octave lower, gave the composer's exact intentions even more truthfully than the 8-ft. dulciana would have done, inasmuch as the little counter-melody could then be thumbed exactly as written for a three-manual organ. His remark was, 'Oh, but that is a bit of a trick, isn't it?' I contend that the means were fully justified by the effect obtained.

## A WORD TO OURSELVES.

One of the greatest dangers which beset a concert-player who has to keep a large audience interested for an entire evening, is to sacrifice the composer's intentions in favour of mere brilliance of technique. He is apt to forget that he is out to interpret greater intellects than his own, and he is tempted to think that the audience wishes to hear what Mr. Blank can do, rather than what John Sebastian Bach has to say. I have heard some players rattle off a Bach fugue at breakneck speed, and the irreverence of the proceeding has more than sufficed to discount any pleasure derived from the technique displayed. It is to be feared, too, that this is the reason why even the great players give us only some six or seven of the larger fugues—viz., those which can be treated in a manner which serves to display the player's finger and pedal dexterity. How seldom one hears, for example, the noble B minor Fugue with its magnificent Prelude! Is it because there is here no chance of display? If only we could endow ourselves with an imagination sufficiently vivid to visualise the figure of the great Cantor seated among the audience, and could persuade ourselves, further, that we must face him after the performance, surely our playing would often gain in point of dignity and reverence!

It is like ploughing the sands to attempt to lay down a line of demarcation beyond which one should not go in the direction of the lighter literature now at our disposal for concert purposes. A man's own good taste (I had almost written good breeding) must decide that question. But I trust that enough has been said to indicate the lines upon which those of us who are in charge of large concert organs are working, and I suggest that the time has come when the art of the concert-player should definitely be accorded a 'place in the sun,' and should be regarded as separate and distinct from that of his church brother. Then, and then only, we shall be spared the spectacle of the church musician playing light and trivial voluntaries, and the equally distressing sight of the concert-player conscientiously grinding out unrelieved Bach and Rheinberger to empty benches.

## COMMENTS FROM AN ORGAN LOFT.

BY HARVEY GRACE.

Mr. Bernard Johnson's article contains much that badly needed saying, and I feel pretty sure that organists generally, both of the concert and church breeds, will heartily agree with him, save in one or two matters of detail. For example, he expresses a fear that 'many, if not most, church organists regard the concert-player as a trickster of the deepest dye—as a man who deliberately "lowers the dignity of the instrument."' He may rest assured that we church organists have nothing but admiration and sympathy for the work of the best concert organists. Most of us feel that the average pianoforte recitalist, who gets through a season by ringing the changes on a Chopin selection, a couple of Beethoven sonatas, a Bach dis-arrangement, and a few other standing dishes, with a small group of Debussy, Ravel, or Scriabin, just to show his up-to-dateness, has an easy task, both mentally and physically, beside the municipal organist, who plays at least weekly, during the greater part of the year, rarely repeats items, and shows an amount of musicianship, taste, and resource in his adaptations of pianoforte and orchestral works that is demanded of no other executant. But all concert organists are not so conscientious as Mr. Johnson. There are some, by no

means a negligible minority, who still 'tickle the ears of the groundlings' with representations of church services or concerts on lakes interrupted by various kinds of bad weather—always, however, including thunder. Before me lies the programme of a recital given by a well-known concert-player, containing an item descriptive of episodes on board ship, including of course a storm (again not without thunder) and a hymn of thanksgiving sung by the relieved mariners (can't you hear them at it?) played on the *voix celeste*, that stop being evidently regarded as the best imitation of the tones produced by Jack in his devouter moments. If Mr. Johnson were at my elbow, I could show him other programmes of concert recitals (played, I regret to say, in that musical North of England behind which London is fondly supposed to lag) that would make him as indignant as they make us church organists.

Consider the position of the latter in this respect. He is generally, by education and environment, a musician of serious tastes. Often he has a small or indifferent organ. Compelled to earn the bulk of his income by teaching or business, he has little time to acquire or maintain a brilliant technique. He has, however, at his fingers' ends a fair repertory of genuine organ music of a good and serious kind, suitable for playing in connection with services. If he gives occasional recitals, he probably bears in mind (as Mr. Johnson rightly thinks he should) that he is playing in a church and not in a concert hall, and will moderate his transports accordingly. When a concert recitalist of the baser type visits his town, plays on an organ with ten times the tonal and mechanical resources of his own modest instrument, and brings down the house with some kind of storm, Batiste's 'Andante in G,' the 'William Tell' Overture, or Variations on 'The old folks at home' (I have seen these four in one programme!), can we wonder at the poor church organist feeling somewhat discouraged and bitter? For the man in the pew on Sunday was perhaps the man in the Town Hall on Saturday. I can hear him saying, as he leaves the church during a piece of real organ music, 'Organ-playing! You should have heard that chap at the Town Hall last night! Made the organ speak, he did, absolutely. Played a storm, too—you could fairly imagine yourself out in it: almost made me turn me coat collar up, 'twas so real. I don't reckon anything of this chap at the church,—dry, I call him.'

I do not think this is an exaggeration of the popular state of mind on the subject. In the matter of music the public knows what it likes, but it knows little else. It is not given to discrimination. An organ recital is an organ recital: if the recital of A pleases and excites, and that of B seems tame in comparison, the public is quite sure that B is in every way far inferior to A. If church organists ever feel inclined to say hard things of concert organists, it is because of the *ad captandum* programmes of a section of the latter. At the same time, let it be admitted handsomely that the conscientious church organist suffers in the same way from some of his own craft. What is the good of the organist of St. Praxed's trying hard to get his congregation to appreciate the best of organ music, when his rival at St. Abinadab's round the corner has no other aim than 'to give the public what it likes,' and being under the impression that the public likes slush, ladles it out accordingly? If he of St. Praxed's dare whisper a word of protest he is accused of showing jealousy of a popular rival.

Mr. Johnson's criticisms and suggestions as to the methods of testing applicants for the post of concert organist are very much to the point. The usual methods of filling a church appointment



also leave much to be desired. If the post is one at which recital work or voluntary playing are prominent features, the applicant's repertory should be tested in some such way as that suggested by Mr. Johnson. The candidate should submit a list of voluntaries (or recital programmes), and should be prepared to play a selection from the list at reasonable notice. His ability in choir-training and accompanying should when practicable be tested by a visit to his church by a competent critic, who should of course be acquainted with such data as the quality of the choir material, specification of the organ, and other local peculiarities.

It is good to find Mr. Johnson contending for the inclusion of pure organ music in concert programmes. We might add to his reasons the fact that no single instrument is so well able to render complex polyphonic music as the organ, on account of the help afforded by the pedals, and also because it is the only instrument that can sustain any number of parts for an unlimited time.

As to transcriptions, the conscientious objectors known to Mr. Johnson must surely be among the last survivors of what will soon be a species of musical dodo. The R.C.O. has long since changed its ban into a blessing, and the artistic transcription of good music no longer needs any apology.

#### THE SUPPLY OF REAL ORGAN MUSIC.

But I fancy many of my church colleagues will be inclined to join issue with Mr. Johnson when he defends the use of transcriptions by bringing forward the well-worn allegation that 'the literature of the organ is extremely limited.' I have heard this said many times, but can never get anything in the way of evidence beyond the fact that Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and a few other classical composers wrote no organ music. This is true, but quite immaterial. The fact remains that there is a very large organ literature of the highest class. If we examine the published lists of recital programmes we see little evidence of this, I admit. But, for the matter of that, if we study a hundred pianoforte or vocal recital programmes, we shall come to the conclusion that there is not, and never has been, much good pianoforte music, or more than a few score of good songs. Organists, like too many of their brothers and sisters of the concert platform (and even of the conductor's desk), prefer the safe and easy game of follow-my-leader to the troublesome and ungrateful rôle of pioneer.

Evidence? Take one organ composer only—Widor. He composed ten Symphonies. The general level of achievement is very high, and many of the movements are amongst the finest things in organ music. How many of our concert organists draw on him for anything but the Pontifical March of No. 1, the Finale of No. 2, the Scherzo, Andante Cantabile, and Finale of No. 4, and the first movement, Allegretto, and Toccata of No. 5? Portions of the magnificent No. 6 are sometimes heard (more, I think, in churches than in concert halls, though it is concert music of the finest); but it is safe to say that Nos. 7, 8, 9, and 10 are practically unknown in England. Nos. 9 and 10 have some dry pages, perhaps, but I am convinced that in 7 and 8 (especially the former) we have movements that are worthy of being placed among the finest things in music (in music, not merely organ music). Most of these Widor works demand for their proper presentation the two things that all concert organists have,—fine instruments and brilliant technique. The average church organist, as I said above, has rarely both, for obvious reasons. Clearly, it is 'up to' the concert recitalist.

After all, a concert organ is an *organ*, and it seems to me that one of the most useful things a concert player can do in the educational line is to train the public in the appreciation of real organ music. I know the objection that will be raised at once: 'The bulk of such music is fitted rather for the church than the concert-hall.' I maintain that there is a great mass of fine organ music fit for both church and concert purposes, with a still further supply for concert use only, and (speaking as a diligent student for years of recital programmes as published in the musical press) I am sure that most church and concert organists have so far done little more than touch the fringe of it. More evidence? Rheinberger wrote twenty Sonatas and about a hundred short pieces besides two Concertos and a Suite, and a set of pieces for strings and organ. All his music is fit for church use, and quite one-half of the sonata movements and detached pieces would serve admirably for that serious part of concert programmes which Mr. Johnson advocates. How many of our concert organists use even a tenth part of it? Many of the beautiful Choral-Improvisations of Karg-Elert are as fit for the concert-hall as for the church (the title-page expressly states that the pieces are for this dual use); and the same remark applies to his fine and original Ten Pieces (Op. 86), the extraordinarily beautiful Fugue, Canzona, and Epilogue (Op. 85, No. 3), based largely on the ancient intonation to the Nicene Creed (the Epilogue is for organ, violin solo, and four-part female chorus), the Symphonic Chorals, and to such interesting works as the 'Vom Himmel hoch' for organ, solo violin, soprano solo, and chorus, the 'Benedictus' for organ, four solo voices, chorus, and harp (or pianoforte), the Fantasia on 'Nun ruhen alle Wald' for organ, violin, and soprano solo. The last-named was given at the Royal College of Music some years ago, but I have heard of no other performance in this country, and very few of any other of the pieces just named.

Turning to France, we find the splendid work of Louis Vierne, one of the outstanding figures in modern French music. Have our concert organists brought his three Symphonies to a hearing—especially the wonderful No. 3? For the polyphonic part of a concert programme, what could be better than one of the six Preludes and Fugues of Saint-Saëns, or his two Fantasias (that in E flat is well-known, but the beautiful and far more subtle work in D flat is rarely heard), or the Marche Religieuse? How many of our prominent recitalists who play the Gothic Suite of Boellmann ever give his second Suite a chance, or his Fantasia in A? This last is one of the most attractive and polished pieces of modern French organ music, full of delicate colouring and beautifully developed. I do not remember seeing it in more than one English programme. It would be easy for me to exceed the space at my disposal with a list of fine works, that, judging from the only evidence available (the published programmes) are neglected by the very players who have the best opportunity of popularising them.

I must, however, say one word on behalf of modern English organ music. Space is limited, so, at the risk of appearing invidious, I will mention two composers only, Lemare and Wolstenholme. These two gifted men have produced between them about 150 pieces, practically all suitable for concert use. I ask my readers to examine the programmes published in the musical press for the past three months, and see, not how many times the composers' names appear, but by how many works they are represented. I think the result will surprise them, and cause wonder that the composers should



so decidedly touch the spot in writing a handful of pieces, and apparently nod when composing the rest. If they will go into the matter they will find that some of the best music of both men is known to a comparatively small circle.

Twenty years ago the public needed education in orchestral music. The organist stepped into the breach and did as much as anybody to supply the want. Much has happened in those twenty years. In all but the smaller towns, there are ample opportunities of hearing orchestras; the pianola and gramophone have arrived, and even the music-lover in a remote village can enjoy his after-dinner pipe to the strains of 'The ride of the Valkyries' by turning a handle, so to speak. Something else has happened too. The literature of the organ has been enormously enriched by composers of the highest standing in France, Germany, England, and Russia. Charity begins at home. Organists have done much for all sorts and conditions of music. Is it not time that they began to do more for that of their own instrument?

#### MISSIONARY WORK.

All honour to the municipal organists who, like Mr. Johnson, realise their responsibilities in the matter of educating the public in all-round music. The performance of Pianoforte Concertos at the Nottingham City organ recitals is an example of the best kind of missionary work,—better, surely, than the playing of arrangements of well-known orchestral items. After all, a city that is able to provide a big concert organ and a man to play it, is not likely to be quite starved in the matter of orchestral concerts. The concert organist's educational opportunities surely lie rather in the direction of bringing to his audience's ears less familiar works, such as concertos, than in Wagner and other extracts which are not only well-known through frequent orchestral performance, but are fully represented in the pianola library. Mr. Johnson admits that where orchestral concerts are fairly frequent, 'there is less reason to include arrangements.' But if the 'literature of the organ is extremely limited,' and there is no need for many orchestral arrangements, what is there left to play? I would suggest that, in addition to the concerto field, there is a great deal of unfamiliar modern pianoforte music that can be made very effective on a concert organ. Neglected old clavier pieces can also be rendered with delightful results. The public need familiarising with both these kinds of keyboard works.

#### LIGHT MUSIC IN CHURCH.

Mr. Johnson protests against church organists trespassing on the concert organists' preserves by playing light music, much of which 'should never be heard within the four walls of a place of worship, because it is avowedly secular.'

I am not going to revive that never-to-be-settled question of what constitutes sacred or secular music. I would only point out that an organist giving a recital in a church quite apart from any religious ceremony may surely be allowed considerable latitude. What is needed is more differentiation between (a) music played as voluntaries; (b) recitals given before or after a service, and which are therefore merely an extension of the voluntary; and (c) recitals given independently. In the first we should certainly be on the subdued and severe side, in the second we may relax, and in the third we may play practically any light music that is good, provided it is free from too aggressively secular associations. (An arrangement of

a popular item that is going the round of the piano-organs, or the restaurant or theatre orchestras, is an example of the kind of thing that should be avoided, however good musically.)

Would Mr. Johnson object to a church recitalist playing the Scherzo from Widor's fourth Symphony, or Wolstenholme's Sketch in G or Andantino in E flat, or Hollins' Overtures in C major and C minor, or any of the scores of similar works by various composers? They are light, though good music; but I fear they cannot be considered to be other than 'avowedly secular.' If the playing of them is poaching on the concert organists' preserves, I fear many of us will go on being unrepentant marauders, though I hope we shall confine our offences to such occasions as (c) in the paragraph above.

Finally, Mr. Johnson need be under no apprehension as to the 'place in the sun' of concert organists. They have it already, and are likely to find it even more roomy and balmy as time goes on. It is the church organist who is at present too often in the shade. But he is not jealous of his brilliant brother at the Town Hall. Both have many interests in common, the repertoires of both overlap, and both have great opportunities and responsibilities in regard to the musical education of the public, from choir-boys up (or down) to town councillors. Is it too much to hope that they will fulfil their responsibilities in such a way as to increase public esteem not only for their instrument, but for its music?

#### Occasional Notes.

The Antient Concert Rooms, Dublin, at which were produced many notable works for more than half-a-century, have recently been acquired by Messrs. Eason for their stationery offices. Originally built in 1835 as the Oil Gas Company offices, the buildings were remodelled by the late Joseph Robinson as the habitat of the Antient Concert Society—founded in 1834—and were inaugurated as the Antient Concert Rooms in 1843. It is well known that Mendelssohn specially scored 'Hear my Prayer' for orchestra, at the request of Robinson, for the Antient Concerts; and it was duly performed in Dublin on December 21, 1848. Here also the Hibernian Catch Club—the oldest in Europe—held its meetings from 1843 to 1915.

It is surely a sign of the decadence of music in Dublin that at present the Irish metropolis is without a concert hall. The Rotunda is a cinema show; the old Royal University Buildings are no longer available; and the Antient Concert Rooms are gone. Moreover, Signor Simonetti (described on the bills as 'the greatest master of the violin in the British Isles') and Mr. Clyde Twelvvetrees are now playing nightly at the Bohemian Picture House, Phibsboro Road, with a 'star musical combination.'

A correspondent sends us the following 'specimen of the unutterable musical newspaper rubbish we endure in Aberdeen':

He has a virile, firm touch, and where 'the poetic motion' may be satisfactorily introduced the player does so with genuinely artistic feeling. As an unbiased exposition of the pianoforte music of the modern writer, Mr. Henderson's recital could not have been improved upon.

Probably not; but why should he have to suffer this balderdash. Why does not the writer stick to 'fires,' and 'inquests'?

## Church and Organ Music.

EDINBURGH SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS.

On May 29, at St. Mary's Cathedral, a very fine organ recital was given by Mr. T. H. Collinson, organist of the Cathedral and president of the Society. Mr. Collinson prefaced his recital with a short account of the Cathedral organ, a notable example of Father Willis's work built in 1879, with the enhancement of electro-pneumatic action and detached console, including 'double-touch' couplers, by the Hope-Jones Organ Company in 1897. The programme—the items of which had been selected by plebiscite—was one of exceptional interest, and the performance throughout was masterly in the highest degree. The following were the items selected by the Society: Prelude and Fugue (St. Anne's), Bach; first Organ Concerto, Handel; Marche Funèbre et Chant Séraphique, Guilmant; Intermezzo, Hollins; Sonata No. 6, Mendelssohn; Dithyramb, Harwood; Finale from Symphony Pathétique, Tchaikovsky; 'Parsifal' Vorspiel, Wagner.

National hymn-music is a feature of the open-air Processions and Intercession services arranged by the Church League for Women's Suffrage, the last of which takes place on July 8. The choir is under the direction of Mr. Martin Shaw, and Miss Rosabel Watson's orchestra is responsible for the accompaniments, besides playing an arrangement of Tallis's fine 'Third Mode Melody.' It is good that the man on the pavement should make acquaintance with such splendid national tunes as 'St. Patrick's Breastplate,' 'Martyrs,' 'Rhuddlan,' 'King's Lynn,' and others in the programme.

A correspondence about a recent performance of Stainer's 'Crucifixion' at East Retford has been sent to us. It is not important, but it illustrates aptly the folly of would-be critics who evidently do not know the elements of the subject about which they venture to write. The offender scornfully confesses that he does not understand what is meant by 'balance and blend' in quartet singing!

Mr. T. H. W. Armstrong has been elected to the Holroyd Music Scholarship (value £100 a year) at Keble College, Oxford. He was educated at H.M. Chapel Royal and the King's School, Peterborough. He was recently appointed assistant organist of Peterborough Cathedral, and is a pupil of Dr. Haydn Keeton.

Mr. A. G. Johnston, who was for twelve years organist and choirmaster of St. Mary's Church, Dublin, has recently been ordained for the curacy of St. Ann's Cathedral, Belfast. On June 14 he was the recipient of a valuable presentation from St. Mary's.

A new unaccompanied Mass for eight voices, composed by Sir George Henschel, was sung for the first time on June 1 at All Saints', Margaret Street. The style is modern and chromatic, and the music is difficult. But it is impressive and devotional.

The late Mr. E. C. Austen, an Eton master, who died on April 3, left £2,000 to King's College, Cambridge, for the maintenance of the chapel service.

### ORGAN RECITALS.

Mr. Albert Orton, at Walton Parish Church—Prelude in D flat, *Chopin*; March (Op. 71) and Finale, 'Pathetic Symphony,' *Tchaikovsky*.

Mr. Fred Gostelow, at Selfridge's (two recitals)—March, 'Pomp and Circumstance' (No. 1), *Elgar*; Choral Song and Fugue, *Wesley*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor, *Bach*; Overture 'Egmont,' *Scherzo Symphonique, Guilmant*.

Mr. A. E. H. Nickson, at St. Peter's, Melbourne—Good Friday music from 'Parsifal,' and 'Seven Words from the Cross,' *Otto Malling*.

Mr. Frederick Richens, at First United Evangelical Church, Lock Haven, Pa., U.S.A. (opening of new organ)—Allegro Appassionata (Sonata No. 5), *Guilmant*; Canzona, *Wheeldon*; Romance in D flat, *Lemare*; Concert Overture in E flat, *Faulkes*.

Mr. F. G. M. Ogbourne, at St. John's, Red Lion Square—Theme and Variations in A, *Hesse*; Air and Variations, *W. T. Best*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor, *Bach*.

Mr. Herbert Hodge, at St. Nicholas Cole Abbey (three recitals)—Marche aux Flambeaux, *Guilmant*; Scherzo (Sonata No. 8), *Rheinberger*; March, *Spohr*; Overture, 'Occasional Oratorio'; Prelude and Fugue in A minor, *Bach*.

Mr. James Gray, at Dysart Parish Church—Benediction Nuptiale, *Saint-Saëns*; Overture, 'Samson'; Prelude and Fugue in D, *Bach*.

Mr. E. H. Sidebotham, at St. George's, Worthing (two recitals)—Prelude on 'Rockingham,' *Parry*; Sonata, No. 1, *Mendelssohn*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Fugue in E flat, *Bach*; Concerto in F, *Handel*; Ave Maria, *Arcadelt-Liszt*.

Mr. E. Roberts West, at St. Nicholas, Warwick (two recitals)—Overture in G, *Lyon*; Fantasia, *R. P. Stewart*; Overture in C minor, *Hollins*; Sursum Corda, *Elgar*.

Mr. R. Woodthorpe Browne, at St. Catherine's, Hatcham—Allegro from Sonata, *Elgar*; Barcarolle, *Sternedale Bennett*; Triumphant March, *Hollins*; 'Ite Missa Est,' *Lemmens*.

Miss Elaine Rainbow, at Queen's Hall—Minuet, *Tours*; 'Le Carillon,' *Wolstenholme*; Prelude in C sharp minor, *Rachmaninov*.

Mr. Frederick J. Tarris, at All Hallows, Bromley-by-Bow—Marche Solennelle, *Maily*; Postlude and Minuet, *Stuart Archer*.

Mr. H. F. Ellingford, at Old Meeting Church, Birmingham—Sonata No. 1, *Mendelssohn*; Finale from Sonata, *Reubke*; Air varied, *Thomas Adams*; 'Autumn,' *Lyon*.

Mr. John E. Moore, at Shipley Parish Church—Fantasy Prelude, *Macpherson*; Elegy, *Bairdston*; Sonata, *Elgar*; 'Dithyramb,' *Harwood*; Capriccio, *Ireland*.

Mr. C. E. Blyton Dobson, at Central Mission, Nottingham (three recitals)—Caprice Orientale, *Lemare*; March on a theme of Handel, *Guilmant*; Canzona, *Wheeldon*; Overture in G, *Lyon*.

Mr. W. Lynwood Farnam, at Emmanuel Church, Boston (two recitals)—Cantabile, *Frank*; third Symphony, *Vierne*; Minuet, *Gigout*; (Bach recital)—three Choral Preludes, Toccata in C, Largo from fifth Violin Sonata, and Prelude to 'God's time is the best' (arranged for violin, harp, and organ), Trio-Sonata No. 1, Prelude and Fugue in G minor.

Miss E. D. Tuck, at Highcliff Church, Hants—Grand Chœur in D, *Guilmant*; Cantilène from Sonata in D minor, *Rheinberger*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor, *Bach*; Intermezzo from Symphony No. 1, *Widor*.

### APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. George Adams, late organist of All Saints' Church, Langport, to St. John's Church, Bovey Tracey, S. Devon.

Mr. A. E. H. Nickson, of St. Peter's, Melbourne, organist and choirmaster to St. John's, Toorak.

Mr. F. J. Nott, organist and choirmaster to St. Peter's, Melbourne.

## Reviews.

*The Organ Works of John Sebastian Bach.* Book XV. The Little Organ Book. Edited by Ivor Atkins, with an introduction by Ernest Newman.

[Novello & Co., Ltd.]

Mr. Widor, in his preface to Schweitzer's 'J. S. Bach,' speaking of the Chorale Preludes, mentions the difficulty he had in understanding certain passages. He felt that on one page Bach was writing absolute music, and on the next appeared to be expressing something in the nature of a programme. Asking Schweitzer how one was to know what idea lay behind such passages, he was told that a knowledge of the words of the hymns would make all clear.

Many an English organist must have found himself in the same difficulty. He was probably well aware of the beauty of the Preludes, but yet felt that somehow he had not got at the true inwardness of the music. How could he, without a key? In many cases the chorale melody was so hidden by arabesques as to be all but indistinguishable, and generally there was no more than a German title to help the player to get at the idea that seemed to be at the back of the music.

There can be no greater testimony to the intrinsic beauty of these works of Bach than the fact that in spite of this ignorance of the melodies and the texts from which the Preludes usually derive their poetic bases, many of our organists have long since placed them among music which, by reason of a rare combination of technical finish, expressiveness, and intimate nature, is for the most part outside the sphere of criticism. The growth of this appreciation of the Choral Preludes will receive a decided impetus from the new Edition which Messrs. Novello are bringing out, the first volume of which lies before us.

It may be said at once that it is exactly what English organists have required, but have so far been unable to obtain, either at home or from abroad,—a carefully edited version of the Preludes, with each number preceded by the Choral melody which it treats, and a verse of the hymn to which it was most frequently sung, the text being given in German and English. The harmonization of the melodies in all but a few cases is by Bach, and is chiefly from the Cantatas. The translations are from standard sources, the majority being from the pen of Caroline Winckworth. There are also some quaint specimens from 'Gude and Godly Ballades' (1568) and Bishop Coverdale's 'Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes' of about the same date, while the Rev. G. R. Woodward's valuable collection, 'Songs of Syon,' has of course been drawn on. The editor, save in one instance, has adopted the Bach Society version of the music, and retains also Bach's grouping of the notes, even though this is at times contrary to modern custom. There is much in his contention that the original grouping often serves as a valuable clue to the phrasing. In the absence of authoritative slurring, it certainly seems advisable to hold fast to anything which may take its place. Most organists, too, will agree with Mr. Atkins that 'these little Preludes should be printed without the customary network of phrase-marks.' What have some of us not suffered from certain German editions, wherein the editor, with Teutonic thoroughness, has divided and sub-divided the phrases, with slurs within slurs, and dots cast round as if from a pepper-pot! After all, the Preludes are mostly constructed on short figures, the phrasing of which is obvious. Mr. Atkins has therefore contented himself with a dot to signify the release of the finger at the end of a phrase, or a short upright line in cases where the break should be more pronounced, and a comma at the end of each line of the choral in certain cases where the player might be likely unintentionally to tie the final note. He has also retained the old use of the pause in this connection. The registration suggested is invariably excellent, and the editor has done well to point out in his prefatory remarks on the subject, that many of the Preludes sound equally well loud or soft, and lend themselves to great variety of treatment. In this, as in other respects, Mr. Atkins is particularly to be commended for not having unduly dotted the 'i's' and crossed the 't's.' Bach has suffered a good deal from over-editing.

Mr. Ernest Newman contributes a long Introduction which is an important addition to the literature of the subject. It is in three parts, the first being historical, the second dealing with the various forms used by Bach, and the third with the poetical, pictorial, and symbolical side of the works. We note, by the by, a slight difference between him and the Editor on a small point. Mr. Newman says that 'for a full understanding of the Preludes, it is necessary to be acquainted not only with the choral melody and Bach's form, but with the whole of the words of the hymns.' (The italics are his.) Mr. Atkins admits that 'the ideal course would have been to have given the hymns in their entirety,' but says that this course was impossible owing to the great length of some of them. 'Fortunately, however,' he goes on, 'as with English hymns, the first verse gives a very fair idea of the drift of the hymn.' As Mr. Newman quotes some striking instances of the first verse being misleading, it seems a pity that a compromise was not effected in such cases by printing the verses that mattered most.

Mr. Newman does not dwell unduly on the pictorial side of the Preludes. He draws attention to a few of the more striking examples, and refers the reader to the pages of Schweitzer and Pirro for fuller particulars.

It may be questioned whether this feature of the Choral Preludes was so much lost sight of by Spitta or Mosewius as is generally supposed. Mr. Newman says that Spitta 'was

unable or unwilling to see many illustrations of it that are patent enough to us,' and that Mosewius, 'though insisting strongly on it, . . . failed to see that what was true of the vocal music was true of the instrumental works also.' It may be suggested that Spitta did not dwell on the point because it was too obvious (even for him), and that Mosewius drew attention to the tone-painting in the vocal works because its presence there was somewhat of an innovation, whereas in the organ works it was a convention. Mr. Newman quotes Ziegler, one of Bach's pupils, as saying that 'his master always urged on him the importance of playing the Chorales not merely as music but "according to the tenor of the words."'

Many of Bach's predecessors and contemporaries wrote Choral Preludes in which the tone-painting is as obvious as that of John Sebastian himself. In his Prelude on 'Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schaar,' and in certain settings of 'Vom Himmel hoch,' Bach employs scale-passages to depict the angelic flights. Buttstedt (1666-1727) uses the same material in dealing with the subject,—indeed, the opening and closing passages of his Prelude on 'Vom Himmel kam' is perhaps more successful pictorially than Bach's. Hanff (1630-1706), Lubeck (1654-1740), Tunder (1614-67), Walther (1684-1748), and others, wrote Preludes in which attempts to illustrate the words are obvious, and sometimes surprisingly successful. Occasionally they wrote sets of Variations dealing with the sentiments of the verses in order. Even Pachelbel at times forsook the somewhat mechanical form that bears his name, and became descriptive. (See, as perhaps the best example, his delicious little piece on 'Vom Himmel hoch,' wherein he treats the pastoral side of Christmas.)

John Caspar Vogler (1697-1765) wrote a long Prelude on the Passion Chorale, 'Jesu Leiden, Pein und Tod,' which in idiom, richness of arabesque, and intensity of expression, recalls so strongly Bach's 'O Mensch, bewein,' that it is actually included in some editions of Bach, and ascribed to him. We mention these examples, because it seems to us that there is a tendency to regard Bach as having done something new in writing tone-pictures, whereas he merely did better what others had done before him. But after all, the tone-painting is a detail that may be—and often is—too much insisted on, with the result that occasionally the music is regarded as describing physical rather than psychical states. It is as examples of intimate expressions of moods that these pieces make their final and lasting appeal. On this aspect of them we cannot do better than quote the words with which Mr. Newman ends his Introduction:

'It is along the converging lines of the poetry and the music of these Preludes that the reverent student of them will work. The closer his familiarity with them, the more he will be amazed both at the emotional heights and depths of this great nature and at the incomparable skill and resource of the musician. "With this key," said Wordsworth of the sonnet, "Shakespeare unlocked his heart." The Choral Preludes are the key to the very heart of Bach. If everything else of his were lost, from them we could reconstruct him in all his pathos and almost all his grandeur.'

We believe that this edition, from a musical and literary point of view, as well as on account of its convenient arrangement and comprehensive nature, will be regarded as one of the most valuable contributions to the organists' library that have appeared for some years.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

*Handel, Canons, and the Duke of Chandos.* By R. A. Streetfield. Pamphlet, Pp. 33. Price 6d. (Charles Whittingham & Co., Chiswick.)

*The Story of the Symphony.* By E. Markham Lee. The Music Story Series. Pp. 239. Price 3s. 6d. net. (The Walter Scott Co.)

*The Russian Arts.* By Rosa Newmarch. Pp. 293. Price 5s. net. (Herbert Jenkins, Ltd.) Deals ably with the development of Art (except Music, which Mrs. Newmarch has elsewhere dealt with) in Russia.



## Correspondence.

## 'A LITTLE BACH PROBLEM.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—I am interested in the discussion between Mr. Newman and Mr. Ivor Atkins with regard to Bach's use of the hymn 'Heut triumphiret Gottes Sohn,' and an examination of various Lutheran hymn- and tune-books old and new which are accessible to me, seems to confirm Mr. Newman's view of its having been regarded by Bach as an Easter rather than as an Ascension hymn. It is as an Easter hymn that both words and tune first appear in B. Gesse's 'Geistliche Deutsche Lieder,' 1601. Gesse's five-voice setting is given in Schöberlein's 'Schatz des liturgischen Chorgesangs,' 1872. The Ascension hymn of Gregor Ritzsch beginning with the same words appeared in 1620, and while manifestly based on the older Easter hymn, and meant to be sung to the same tune, did not meet with the same general acceptance for Church use. Of the older books of Bach's time, I have by me Crüger's 'Praxis Pietatis Melica' in the edition of 1702, C. F. Witt's 'Psalmodia Sacra,' 1715, the 'Sachsen-Weissenfelsches Kirchenbuch' of 1712, König's 'Harmonischer Liederschatz,' 1738, and the 'Freylinghausen Gesangbuch' of 1741, also Gottfried Arnold's 'Gebetbuch,' 1704, and in every one of these 'Heut triumphiret' appears only as an Easter and not as an Ascension hymn. It is also interesting to note that in Witt's 'Psalmodia,' published at Gotha, the main Easter hymns are given in very much the same order as in Bach's Weimar autograph quoted by Mr. Newman. 'Heut triumphiret' comes between 'Erstanden ist der heilige Christ' and 'Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag.' Mr. Atkins mentions an Ascension hymn of Joh. Olearius also beginning 'Heut triumphiret.' I am unable to find this, but since Olearius was for a considerable time General-Superintendent at Weissenfels, and died there in 1684, it is all the more remarkable that the Saxe-Weissenfels book only contains the Easter 'Heut triumphiret' and not the Ascension, though it has several other hymns and a 'Passions-Erklärung' by Olearius. All the eight modern books to which I can refer, including Eickhoff's 'Haus-Choralbuch,' 1896, Liliencron, 'Chorordnung,' 1900, and a 'Geistlicher Melodien-Schatz,' 1907, have only the Easter 'Heut triumphiret.' The Ascension hymn of Ritzsch I only find in a purely literary work of Albert Fischer, 'Das Kirchenlied des 17ten Jahrhunderts,' 1904.

Mr. Newman mentions among the titles of preludes left uncomposed in Bach's manuscript, 'Komm, heiliger Geist, erfüll' die Herzen,' and adds that he does not know what hymn this is. It is not, properly speaking, a hymn at all, but a prose translation of an old Latin Antiphon for Whit-Sunday, of which there is also the metrical version, 'Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott,' with two additional stanzas by Luther. Both the prose and the metrical version were in use in Lutheran churches: the prose version as adapted to the old Plainsong of the original Latin; the metrical version with another tune which first appears in 'Walther's Gesangbuch,' 1524. It would appear from what Mr. Newman quotes that Bach intended to compose Preludes on both the Plainsong and the newer tune. Even in so pietistic a book as 'Freylinghausen's Gesangbuch' one finds both the prose version with its adapted Plainsong and the metrical version with the new tune. Both are also contained in the Saxe-Weissenfels book of 1712. The Latin text with its Plainsong is given as the Lutheran Antiphon for Whitsun Eve in L. Lossius's 'Psalmodia,' 1595. Along with the use of Latin in the service, Lutheran churches retained for some time more of the tradition of Plainsong than we did. Although this Antiphon no longer appears in the usual Roman books, Bäumer ('Das Katholische Kirchenlied') mentions that it is still sung in several dioceses of Roman Catholic Germany before the High Mass on Whit-Sunday.

The interest one has felt in the old Lutheran hymns and music makes one regret all the more keenly that modern Germany should have so completely turned its back upon its musical-religious past. The spirit of modern Germany is certainly not that of Paul Gerhardt and Sebastian Bach, any more than it is that of Beethoven or Goethe and Schiller.

Smallburgh.

J. R. MILNE.

## 'THE MELODIC POVERTY OF MODERN MUSIC.'

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—Mr. Scott is evidently one of those people to whom a melody is—well—not a melody if it is other than strictly diatonic. He speaks a great deal about melodies, tunes, and themes without defining clearly what he means by any of them. The term *melody* he apparently restricts in a manner not in the least warranted. How, one would like to know, would Mr. Scott classify the following Indian fragment:



This typical specimen of our vocal melody certainly does not fit in with Mr. Scott's 'tunes which everybody can get hold of,' nor has it the smallest feature in common with anything to be found in Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Schubert, Chopin, &c. It is therefore not a melody according to Mr. Scott!

What you and your readers will observe in the quotation above is its very striking affinity with many a theme from ultra-modern Occidental music—a fact of the very highest significance.

Mr. Scott, I think, ventures too far in saying that melody—his idea of melody presumably—and thematic interest 'should be one of their [modern composers], that is' most 'invaluable resources.' To speak of the 'all-powerful' effect of 'definite melody' is presumptuous, to say the least. May I ask Mr. Scott to consider for a moment that stupendous masterpiece of modern music, Ravel's song 'Le Marin-Pêcheur'—a thing impossible outside modern music or Ravel. Will he dare to suggest that the composer would have made a greater work of art of this gem had he made use of 'definite melody'?

What conceivable 'definitely melodic' phrase could approach that perfectly magical chord-motive preceding the words 'Je ne respirais plus...?'

There is no possible place for Mr. Scott's 'definite melody' in modern music—a thing which, with his apparent knowledge, he ought to know and recognise. Melody as understood in a wide and not unwarrantedly restricted sense there is in abundance of rarest and richest beauty, as moving and eloquent, I dare to think, as anything to be found in the 'old masters,' together with—especially in the case of the modern French masters—an absence of exaggerated emphasis and redundancy of which the former are anything but guiltless.—Yours truly,

175, Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W. D. K. SORABJI.

Mr. H. A. Scott, to whom the foregoing has been submitted, writes: 'It would require another article to reply in detail to Mr. Sorabji's interesting letter, and for the present I must content myself with pointing out that, criticising my article he appears to have overlooked the following paragraph:

I am not suggesting that they [modern composers] should not write music of what may be called the non-thematic type when they are moved to do so. On the contrary, music of this type has always existed, as I have pointed out already. . . . But in no previous age has it been favoured exclusively. Even granting that the current examples in this style are all that their warmest champions can say, why need such an overwhelming proportion of modern music be cast in this particular mould?

From this Mr. Sorabji will perceive that I expressly guarded myself in advance against the particular line of criticism which he adopts. Whether he is right in his assertion that 'there is no possible place for "definite melody" in modern music,' I will not stay now to discuss; but if he is, I am disposed to reply in the terms of the historic advocate, 'That is my case, m'Lud.'

(Continued on page 337.)



# Fairest Isle.

SONG FROM "KING ARTHUR"

ARRANGED FOR FOUR VOICES BY JOHN E. WEST.

Words Adapted.

Composed by HENRY PURCELL.

LONDON: NOVELLO AND COMPANY, LIMITED; NEW YORK: THE H. W. GRAY CO., SOLE AGENTS FOR THE U.S.A.

*Andante.*

**SOPRANO.** *mf* 1. Fair - est Isle, all isles . . ex - cel - ling, Cra - dled 'mid . . the

**ALTO.** *mf* 1. Fair - est Isle, all isles ex - cel - ling, Cra - dled 'mid . . the

**TENOR.** *mf* 1. Fair - est Isle, all isles ex - cel - ling, Cra - dled 'mid . . the

**BASS.** *mf* 1. Fair - est Isle, all isles ex - cel - ling, Cra - dled 'mid . . the

**ACCOMP.** *mf* *Andante. ♩ = 80.* (For practice only.)

*p* west - ern seas, Where sweet Peace hath made . . her dwell - ing,

*p* west - ern seas, Where sweet Peace hath made her . . dwell - ing,

*p* west - ern seas, Where sweet Peace hath made her . . dwell - ing,

*p* west - ern seas, Where sweet Peace hath made her dwell - ing,

*p* west - ern seas, Where sweet Peace hath made her dwell - ing,

Where she sport - eth at . . . her ease! Bless - ed Isle, where glad - ness

Where she sport - eth at . . . her ease! Bless - ed Isle, where glad - ness

Where she sport - eth at . . . her ease! Bless - ed Isle, where glad - ness

Where she sport - eth at her ease! Bless - ed Isle, where glad - ness

reign - eth, Where the wan - d'r'er find - - eth rest, Where the

reign - eth, Where the wan - d'r'er find - - eth rest, Where the

reign - eth, Where the wan - d'r'er find - - eth rest, Where the

reign - eth, Where the wan - d'r'er find - - eth rest, . . . Where the

churl a - lone . . com - plain - eth, Where the brave and true . . are blest!

churl a - lone com - plain - eth, Where the brave and true . . are blest!

churl . . a - lone com - plain - eth, Where the brave and true . . are blest!

churl a - lone com - plain - eth, Where the brave and true . . are blest!

2. May thy flag for ev - er glor - ious, In . . the cause . . of

2. May thy flag for ev - er . . glor - ious, In . . the cause . . of

2. May thy flag . . for ev - er . . glor - ious, In . . the cause . . of

2. May thy flag for ev - er glo - rious, In the cause . . of

truth . . un - furled, O - ver wrong and hate . . vic - tor - ious,

truth . . un - furled, O - ver wrong and hate vic - - tor - ious,

truth . . un - furled, O - ver wrong and hate vic - - tor - ious,

truth un - furled, O - ver wrong and hate vic - tor - ious,

Shine a bea - con o'er . . the world! May thy sons be al - ways

Shine . . a bea - con o'er . . the world! May thy sons be al - ways

Shine a . . bea - con o'er . . the world! May thy sons be al - ways

Shine a bea - con o'er the world! May thy sons be al - ways

dar - ing, May . . thy daugh - ters all . . be fair, For their

dar - ing, May thy daugh - ters all . . be fair, For their

dar - ing, May . . thy daugh - ters all . . be fair, For their

dar - ing, May thy daugh - ters all be fair, . . . For their

coun - try's hon - our car - ing, Then to harm thee none.. shall dare!

coun - try's hon - our car - ing, Then . . to . . harm thee none.. shall dare!

coun - try's hon - our car - ing, Then to . . harm thee none . . shall dare!

coun - try's hon - our car - ing, Then to harm thee none.. shall dare!



(Continued from page 332.)

## HANDEL AT CANONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE MUSICAL TIMES.'

SIR,—Dr. Sibley must not talk to me about 'quibbling' so long as he refrains from producing his authority for the statement that 'Esther' was produced in Whitchurch Church on August 20, 1720. I challenged him to do so in the letter that you printed in the *Musical Times* for June, and he ignored the challenge altogether. The statement, I am convinced, is a mere fabrication, but I should like none the less to trace it to its source.—Yours faithfully,

R. A. STREATFIELD.

As we go to press we hear with great regret of the death of Dr. Charles Donald Maclean, honorary secretary of the International Musical Society, which took place at his residence, 67, Drayton Gardens, South Kensington, London, W., on June 23. We shall refer fully to his career in our next issue. He was born in 1843.

## Obituary.

We regret to record the following deaths:

GRAHAM P. MOORE, in Australia, on May 5, the well-known pianoforte teacher who was for twenty-five years a professor at the Royal College of Music. Graham Ponsonby Moore was the elder son of the late Edward Charles Moore (a great-grandson of the 5th Earl of Drogheda), and was born in Ballarat, Australia, in 1859. He studied music in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, and amongst his teachers were Theodor Kullak and Scharwenka. He was very successful as a composer of educational 'music for the pianoforte. Most of his compositions were published in Germany, and are better known there than in England, but his brilliant 'Poetic Studies' and many of his slighter pieces have enjoyed considerable success. His 'First Principles of Pianoforte Technique,' published by Bosworth, is a standard work on the subject. He leaves a widow and two daughters. His death will be keenly felt by his brother professionals, amongst whom he was extremely popular, and also by a wide circle of pupils. The most distinguished of these was Mr. Harold Bauer, who had a very warm regard and admiration for his master's gifts. Mr. Moore was an examiner for the Associated Board of the R.A.M. and R.C.M., and in this capacity he undertook four lengthy Colonial tours.

JOHN B. M. CAMM, at Bournemouth, on May 22, aged seventy-six. A great musical enthusiast, whose enthusiasm was always directed towards the maintenance of Bournemouth's high reputation as a musical centre. He was an unflinchingly staunch supporter of Mr. Dan Godfrey's policy with regard to high-class orchestral music, and would fight for his ideals through thick and thin. He frequently presented valuable music to the Municipal Orchestra, but a few years ago crowned all his previous munificent gifts by presenting to the town his splendid library of music, which exceeds £4,000 in value. His reverence for the music of Brahms was profound—a fact which was plainly apparent to all who read his very individual contributions to one of the Bournemouth weekly journals. He was a man with great charm of manner, and a fund of good anecdote was always at his command.

WILLIAM JOHN BIRKBECK, at his residence in Norfolk, on June 9. Born in February, 1859, he was educated at Eton and Oxford. He became a great authority on Plainsong, and edited that section for the *English Hymnal*; and he was interested in Russian and Greek ecclesiastical music, translating and adapting the words and music of the Kontakion of the Faithful Departed, from the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom. This was first sung in the English Church at the funeral of Prince Henry of Battenberg, and since then has been much used at funeral services.

STANLEY HAWLEY, on June 13, at Ilkeston, Derbyshire, where he was born on May 17, 1867. He was educated at the Royal Academy of Music, where he distinguished himself as a pianist. At a concert given at St. James's Hall in 1887 he played Grieg's Pianoforte Concerto. He was a sound musician and an excellent accompanist, and in the latter capacity toured with Madame Patti in 1906. He had gifts as a composer. Some of his best efforts were associated



Photo by Histed.

with spoken recitation. His edition of 'Popular Musical Classics' has specialities that are designed to facilitate performance. For the last few years he was honorary secretary to the Royal Philharmonic Society, and his energy in that post was a great factor in the success of recent seasons. He was a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music and a Liveryman of the Musicians' Company, of which he was the first medallist. A very unselfish man, he endeared himself to a wide circle of musical friends, who deeply mourn his untimely death.

CLARA LOUISE KELLOGG, a celebrated soprano, in America, in June (?). She was born at Sumterville, South Carolina, in 1842. Her first appearance of importance was as Gilda in 'Rigoletto' in New York in 1861, and her first season in London was at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1867. In the 'seventies she successfully organized an opera touring company to sing in English. In 1887 she married her manager, Carl Strakosch. In 1913 she issued the 'Memoirs of an American Prima Donna' (G. Putnam's Sons), a chatty and interesting account of her life. She had an exceptional voice, and her instincts were artistic.

FRANCIS J. THORNS, Second Lieutenant Royal Berkshire Regiment, aged twenty-seven, who died of wounds received in action in France, May 31, 1916. He was a former 'Ada Lewis' (Violin) Scholar of the Royal Academy of Music and a Licentiate and Associate of that institution. For some years he was a member of Queen's Hall Orchestra. Prior to the outbreak of war he was music-master at Tettenhall College, Wolverhampton. He joined the Inns of Court O.T.C., and obtained his commission in July, 1915. He had been in France only fifteen days when he was mortally wounded.

JOHN BARDSLEY, tenor singer, from pneumonia, on April 6, in America. He was born at Lancaster in 1884. In 1901 he gained an Ada Lewis Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. He sang with the Beecham Opera Company, and later with the Century Opera Company in New York. He had a robust voice and a dramatic style.

MICHEL HAMBOURG, at Toronto, in June. He was the founder of the Conservatoire of Music there. In 1888 he was appointed a professor of pianoforte at the Conservatoire at Moscow, and later he came to London and thence proceeded to Toronto.

F. A. KEENE, on May 27. He was organist of Sandringham Church from 1907 until the time of his death. Before that he was for twenty-two years organist of St. Saviour's, Clapham. An able player, he also composed many works to Latin words for ecclesiastical use. He was born in 1871.

BESSIE WAUGH, at Dublin, early this year. She was a pianist of considerable ability, and was associated with the tours of the best concert parties. She was born in 1840.

Mr. James Bates has lost his elder son, LIEUT. BATES (Cheshire Regiment), who was killed at the French front recently whilst, says his Lieut.-Col., 'gallantly leading his men in a successful charge to capture a crater.' He was buried near Rheims. We know many of our readers will share our sincere sympathy with Mr. Bates and his family.

## PARIS AND THE LAST COLONNE-LAMOUREUX CONCERT.

(EIGHT FRENCH COMPOSERS CONDUCTING THEIR WORKS.)

BY PÉTRO J. PÉTRIDIS.

Paris could never assume a more festive air to honour the master-musicians who actually represent with such dignity the French artistic genius. The storm of the last few days calmed down to mild spring weather. The pale sunshine in the open air kept the concert-hall temperature at a tolerable degree, and the stifling air so common to the last indoor concerts of the dying season was absent from yesterday's imposing solemnity. Besides, it was 'Rameaux' Sunday,\* and a profusion of green boughs gave a livelier look to persons and things. The public had an attitude full of respect to the events of the day, and the absolute faith in the successful issue of the War joined artists and auditors in a thrilling outburst of enthusiasm. Under such conditions the musical manifestation of yesterday marks an epoch in the artistic life of Paris. Eight of the greatest composers of France joined their talents in a splendid *dan* of fraternal solidarity. MM. Camille Saint-Saëns, Gabriel Fauré, Alfred Bruneau, Camille Erlanger, Vincent d'Indy, and Gabriel Pierné met for the first time on an equal footing to contribute to the glorification of French genius. Each conducted a work of his own, and the ensemble of the performances gave a strong impression of what the regenerated modern French School has accomplished these last thirty years. But, in spite of the fulness of the programme, a gap was felt. Why was M. Claude Debussy absent from such a national festival? He represents what is best in pure French art—grace and elegance, lyric and dramatic sobriety. And could he not offer us priceless glimpses of the richness of the French soul by the contrast of his paganism with the catholicism of M. Vincent d'Indy? We deplore sincerely that M. Debussy was not present to conduct his 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune' or fragments of 'Pelléas and Mélisande.' And M. Ravel, and some other younger and promising ones: the strife of schools accounts partly for these omissions.

First came M. Gabriel Pierné with four fragments from his 'Suite Basque,' inspired by M. Pierre Loti's drama 'Ramuntcho.' We listened to an Overture on the popular Basque themes: 'Hanche, ikhazketako, Aurresku (a national dance in the Spanish Basque provinces), Asteraco Zortzicoa.' The motives were very lively and of an interesting picturesqueness. But what is almost fatal in all works based on popular motives is their striking affinity. More than once during the performance certain pages of Bizet's 'Carmen' or of 'L'Arlesienne' came before my vision. The geographical correlation of the original themes treated in these two works

made the affinity still closer. The orchestration is very conservative, with its classic colloquial entries of the strings, and of the wind and brass groups. At critical moments of the dramatic development we had some conventional mingled sonorities that never transgressed sobriety. The prelude of Act 2, called the 'Jardin de Gracieuse,' hit its aim. A flute duet, treated with an imitative and free counterpoint, is sustained by a gracious accompaniment of the strings both *arco* and *pizzicato*. It is simple and charming. Next came the 'Couvent d'Amesqueta: Goure Jaona' (ancient Basque canticle). Here we had a naive but broad plainsong executed chiefly by one flute accompanied by a single string quatuor (one of each category). The piece has an impressive, poetic charm that reacted on the audience. I fancied old, heavy-vaulted churches, with a thickly shaded yard in front and lonely hero-tombs around. The last movement is called 'Fandangillo' (de Fontarabie), a theme drawn from the handwritten *cahier* of a drummer. The character of this piece is determined by a colloquy between the orchestra on one side and on the other a flute playing behind the stage, seconded by a drum beating a burlesque rhythmical accompaniment. In all these fragments were seen bright-coloured tableaux of the sunny South. The work would surely gain more if played with the scene for which it was written.

Then M. Gabriel Fauré, in a manner almost diffident, proceeded to the stand. He conducted in tranquil fashion, letting the players go on almost unmolested. His contribution to the programme consisted of the incidental music to 'Shylock,' a comedy of M. Ed. Haraucourt drawn from Shakespeare—an *entr'acte* written in a very simple, archaic style, uttered in a Shakespearean mood. The short themes, set forth neatly and in a clearly cut development, are reminiscent of the classic writers. The strings do most of the work in the orchestra, except a brass instrument that, throughout this section and in a part of the following one, sustains a rhythmic pedal on the dominant which constitutes also the most salient motive. In the third part of the work, a Nocturne, we found the old master in one of his favourite moods. The orchestra was soothed to a sweet *piano*, and melodious waves filled the air and lulled the audience to a nocturnal dreaming. The Finale is written in *pizzicato* style, slightly suggesting a fugue. A very live performance provoked thunders of applause, and the old master, with faltering step, came up twice or thrice to thank the public.

But before the emotion caused by the sight of the venerable artist was quite dispelled, M. Alfred Bruneau appeared to drag us back to life and its tragedies. Tall, bony, in a tightly-buttoned frock coat, stepping firmly and holding high a face strangely reminiscent of that of Zola, he at once subdued both public and players with the force of his personality. All had the presentiment that something wild and tragic was going to take place. Penthesilée, queen of the Amazons, comes down from the cold steppes of Scythia, and with her virgin sisters rushes forth into the plains to kill Achilles, the most beautiful of the Hellenes. She threatens the hero with her implacable hatred, and swears to revenge the kings slain by him, the maids whose hearts he has conquered, the trophies he has won. In her mad ride the virgin queen little knows that before the day is over she will lie blood-stained in the dust, casting on the beautiful warrior a look full of love. What a subject for the dramatic powers of M. Bruneau! We listened first to a symphonic prelude, and then the charming voice of Mlle. Marthe Chenal began telling us, in a calm, recitative-like manner, of the first wild ardour of the warrior queen. Little by little the recitative disappears under a martial frenzy pervading the music, and ascends to a dramatic climax of marvellous effect. Shudders took hold of us as we drew near to the fight. Suddenly, through storm and thunder of the orchestra, the voice of Mlle. Chenal pierced like a flash. The fatal blow is given, and there lies the virgin, a spear through her breast and a crimson stream gushing forth. The orchestra groans, moans, and shrieks in desperate dissonances. Achilles comes forth to see the fallen foe. Their eyes meet. The dying queen expires, turning upon Achilles a fleeting glance of passionate love, born and dead in a moment. Dissonances melt away into beautiful chords, coloured by flutes and harps. With throbbing hearts the audience relinquished the strong personality and virile music of M. Alfred Bruneau.

\* April 16.

M. Paul Dukas selected for hearing his Dramatic Symphony 'La Péri' rather than any other of his symphonic poems. His choice was perhaps well justified, for the performance of 'La Péri,' under the composer's direction, was in a way an effort to divert to this work some of the popularity that seems to have been monopolised by the famous orchestral scherzo 'L'Apprenti Sorcier'—which personally I would have preferred to see on the programme rather than 'La Péri,' however attractive a creature a Péri may be.

Methodically 'L'Apprenti Sorcier' offers an originality of thought that is inherent in the composer's temperament, while in 'La Péri' we are always conscious that great reticence is exercised by the composer to create a *genre*, to find an Orientalistic way of representing in music a dramatic plot. To be clearer, I may say that 'La Péri' begins in a perfectly Oriental mood. The strings, or part of them, in *sourdisines*, the flutes, the horns, in very originally mingled sonorities paint the landscape. We really fancy Oriental gardens, with tropical plants shading limpid brooks and all that sort of thing. But suddenly we are torn away from this magic land and plunged deep into a Wagnerian or Franckist harmonic deluge. We even perceive harmonic marches and other artifices strongly suggestive of musical *études*. Persia, her gardens and enchanted Peris, disappears! From time to time we get rapid glimpses of these vanished beauties, but they do not last long. Furthermore, certain associations, purely subjective perhaps, kept me constantly in a mood that defied Orientalism. I could not banish from my mind a motive from the Allegretto of César Franck's D minor Symphony. It kept buzzing in my ears while certain parts of 'La Péri' were being performed. This association may be strictly personal, as I have said, but it illustrates some tendencies common to the disciples of César Franck. Anyhow, I traced briefly the first salient difference between 'L'Apprenti Sorcier' and 'La Péri.' Another noteworthy point is that the first of these works has an intense inner life, perceptible in every little bit of thematic development. The same is not the case with 'La Péri.' In spite of the composer-conductor's personal force, and the orchestra's tolerable compliance with his indications, the Poem did not warm up during its performance. We felt it painfully, and longed all the more for 'L'Apprenti Sorcier.' The plot of 'La Péri' is drawn from a Persian fable, and tells the eternal story of Dr. Faust. Iskender, feeling his youth slipping away, goes around the world to find the flower of immortality. In the extreme confines of the earth, on the steps that lead up to Ormuzd, a Péri lies asleep, holding in her hand the long-desired flower. Iskender steals the lotus flower, but soon the Péri awakes, and, realising her loss, enchants poor Iskender with the dance of the Peris. Iskender, madly in love with the Péri, cannot resist the touch of her cheek, and hands back the flower, whereupon the Péri melts into light. Iskender, mourning, feels that his end draws nigh, and finally he is swallowed up in the darkness. The subject, as we see, is rich in situations. There is, above all other things, the melancholy note of Oriental fatalism. But to strike this touching Oriental note in music, a composer must have been born in the lands of eternal fairy life, must be of the races which for centuries have dreamed poetic impossibilities. Such music must be simple, reflecting the bright sunshine and the deep blue sky. How can leaden clouds portray Oriental visions? M. Dukas's science of composition, and still more his rich knowledge of the resources of the orchestra, are all the more remarkable in his great effort. Many other points might be stated for or against the work, but I must not go beyond the limits of this short description. The prominent impression left by the music was its lack of simplicity. Simplicity, on the other hand, marked the chief quality of the work of M. Gabriel Fauré. In connection with this remark it may be noted that a systematic war is continually waged between the science of music and music as an art. Very often the first takes the upper hand, and we have extraordinary mathematical developments offered to us instead of moving, expressive music. Could not M. Debussy set the equilibrium right by his sobriety—a quality so rare with most composers?

Dr. Camille Saint-Saëns conducted his 'Orient and Occident.' It is a march originally written for a military band, and later re-orchestrated for the Lamoureux Concerts. We have rarely had the chance of hearing this composition,

and its performance on this occasion was therefore the more interesting. The character of this piece, as its title clearly indicates, is determined by the contrast and, later, by the fusion, of the different kinds of music of the Occidental and the Oriental races. A purely Occidental introduction is followed by an Oriental *intermède*. The flutes, to which the gong answers in a simple countermelody rhythm, give the fleeting impression of Chinese music. The originality of this *intermède* had a diverting effect on the hearers. The first theme recurs, treated in fugal style. The first exposition of the subject is given to the cellos, and successively the altos, the second and the first violins, in an ascending progression, usher in the subject theme. While this orchestral fugue proceeds to its normal development, the rhythm and the melody of the Orient slip in little by little, and finally are absorbed in the masterful stretto of the orchestra. The works and the name of this great master are familiar to every music-lover. I need therefore say nothing more, but only observe that Dr. Saint-Saëns wears always the same lively, youthful air. He was deeply moved by the ovations of the public, and himself in turn applauded heartily the other composers, and especially M. Gabriel Fauré, his old student,—though the latter artist has grown more careworn in his profession than the doyen of our musical world.

Mlle. Marthe Chenal sang three Russian poems translated by Catulle Mendès, and set by M. Camille Erlanger. The first, entitled 'Tsar of the heavens,' by the poet Tioutchev, voices the mournful resignation of the peasant. The music secures its expressive effect by a descending tetrachord, which though not totally chromatic persistently recalls the ethereal motive given by the flutes alone at the opening of 'L'après-midi d'un faune.' During the whole length of the 'Tsar of the heavens' the chief motive comes in again and again in a redundant *modus perpetuum* which promised to go on for ever if the verbal text had shown any similar disposition. The second poem, 'The only tears,' by Krassov, left no other impression except the sentimentality of its music. The last of the settings, 'The Sunrise,' owns Sermentov as its author. It is a Cossack war-song, and M. Erlanger expresses very well the martial gait of the words. The enthusiasm of the public burst out in frenetic manifestations. The composer, however, gave no acknowledgment, and seemed to maintain a detached aloofness. Perhaps he did well, feeling that the cheers were more for France's great Ally than for the artist who had set these Russian poems. The temper of the audience was shown in a vociferous demand for the 'Marseillaise,' and the uproar did not die down until Mlle. Marthe Chenal had promised to sing the national hymn at the end of the programme.

M. Chevillard conducted without the score his Symphonic poem 'Le chêne et le roseau,' subdivided into 'A Landscape—Dialogue—Drama.' This symphonic work constitutes a sort of musical commentary on the famous fable of Lafontaine. 'A Landscape' serves as a *milieu* for the dramatis personæ. In the middle of this movement two short motives come in, one given to the bass-tuba and representing the 'chêne,' and the second played by the English horn and characterising the 'roseau.' These two motives are developed in the section entitled 'Dialogue' according to the text of the myth. The ensemble of the work is imposing. The orchestral mass is dealt with by the composer in an amazingly masterful manner. The purity of the melodic ramifications of the poem made it easier to follow the whole development, and thus to feel and understand the author's musical ideas. It must, however, be admitted that this number would surely have been more appreciated had the listeners not been already tired by the great length of the programme, that so far had been presented without any interval.

The same may be said of the following work, but the appearance of M. Vincent d'Indy and Mlle. Blanche Selva decided the audience to make an effort in order fully to enjoy M. d'Indy's 'Symphony on a French mountain song' for orchestra and pianoforte. According to an announcement in the programme, this composition is not a concerto for the pianoforte, but a real symphonic work in which no instrument occupies a principal place. The pianoforte is one more voice by which the orchestra is enriched. No virtuoso effect for its own sake is looked for in this Symphony. Every idea is destined to contribute expression. As to the structure of the



Symphony, I follow the programme annotations, which probably have been suggested by M. d'Indy himself. The work is divided into three parts, according to the classic type. In the opening part, after a short Introduction in which the 'Mountain-song' is given out by the English horn and then by the flute, there begins a moderately animated movement built upon two themes. The first, akin to the 'Mountain song,' appears in the bass. It is abrupt, gloomily passionate, in spite of the light G major tonality. It recalls the physical impressions of a wearisome march. To this theme a second one is opposed, tender, feminine, and soothing by its descending formula. These two themes and a few reminiscences of the original 'Mountain song,' have provided the composer with material for diverse, rich, and moving development. The second part, 'moderate, but not slow,' is an ardent reverie where the composer seems to abandon himself to the charm of recollection. The third and last part, a kind of mountain dance, extremely picturesque in its ingenious combinations of themes, rhythms, and sonorities, would exercise an irresistible effect on the most varied audiences. Especially noteworthy and unforgettable is the passage where all the strings sustain the motive in a double-timed rhythm worked up to a violent crescendo. One more interesting feature of this Symphony is undoubtedly its cyclic character, impressed by the reappearance, at the end, of the 'Mountain song' in equal and rapid notes, serving as accompaniment to another phrase articulated in detached notes and itself a fragment of the same original song. Thus the cyclic order, introduced by César Franck into the different sonata forms, is cultivated by the disciples of the great master. The unity of these forms is therefore all the more solid. The Symphony of M. d'Indy has indicated it once more in splendid fashion.

The proceedings were brought to a close by the admirable voice of Mlle. Marthe Chenal in her singing of 'La Marseillaise,' a contribution that kindled in all bosoms the spark of patriotic enthusiasm and effectively crowned a memorable and successful occasion.

#### ROYAL INSTITUTION LECTURES.

On May 25, June 1 and 8, a series of lectures was delivered by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, his subject on the first date being 'The Beginnings of the Orchestra and its Early Combinations.' He said that the modern orchestra was the long and slowly attained result of much experiment, ingenuity, and artistry. In order to arrive at an estimate of the now completed labours of centuries, it was necessary to consider the gradual improvements in the construction of the instruments, the invention of new ones, and the efforts of musicians to make them speak in concert. It was more than doubtful whether Bach ever heard any of his instrumental pieces played by others as conceived in his brain. Beethoven made unrelenting demands upon the instrumentalists of his day, and it was improbable that the high degree of executive skill for which his music called could have been quite realised.

Up to a comparatively recent period the music of the great masters compelled the rapid advance of technique, but within living memory we had witnessed a reversal of the process; the brilliant accomplishments of the executive artist have reacted on the work of the composer, and that to an extent that it was not easy to say which was the master and which the servant. The desire to keep on adding to the colours on an over-filled palette was only a lust for show and mere noise. Alps had been rising upon Alps. Certain purple patches in the instrumentation of "Elektra," for instance, had caused a wicked satirical verse-maker of his acquaintance to remark that the orchestra

'Squealed, banged, and thumped with emphasis percussive: The hideous din could hardly have been worse, if Lucifer's own private band had made it, And he himself had written, scored, and played it!'

The lecturer then alluded to some of the scoring in the 16th century, and described many of the curiously weird combinations used by Orlando di Lasso, from which two conclusions could be drawn—first, that there was no difference between vocal and instrumental music; and, second, that the massing together of the instruments was more or less whimsical. No scheme of tone balance, reference to tints, or relative strength or weakness existed. He also described

the instruments of the period, a number of interesting slides being thrown on the screen, taken from Viridung and Praetorius. The ideal standards and aspirations of the old enthusiasts were no doubt quite as high as ours, and their efforts to reach them equally sincere; but we reproduced our music under much more satisfactory conditions, and to see these instruments was to be convinced that the sounds emitted must have been, as often as not, fitful and wild. The music itself we know to have been good on paper, but it could never have been anything else than very dreadful to listen to.

The subsequent two lectures were on 'The Revival of Chamber Music.' These will be reported in our next number.

#### BRITAIN'S MUSIC TRADE.

Mr. Henry Billinghurst, of Messrs. John Brinsmead & Sons, in opening the meeting of the British Music Convention, of which he is president, at Harrogate, on May 23, said that £37,000,000 of capital was invested in the British musical industry, employing 62,500 persons. This industry was faced last October with a duty, nominally 33½ per cent., but really about 50 per cent., and in March the final blow was aimed by the Government in the total prohibition of the importation of all component parts. While the Government was taking such action as must certainly ruin a great industry, they continued to allow German music and instrument agencies and businesses owned by Germans to trade, and thus preserve their goodwill until peace followed. The Convention Committee, with the active assistance of Mr. E. Ricketts, of the Gramophone Company, had, however, now secured permission from the Government to import the requisite supplies from France, and, if favourable, the consideration for importation of other necessary supplies from Switzerland and Italy. They must now consolidate to keep out the £759,450 of musical instruments imported annually from Germany and Austria, to say nothing of gramophones and sheet music. Now was the time to secure Germany's whole four millions of overseas trade and Austria's £271,500.

Mr. Dow, of Messrs. Murdoch & Murdoch, said that Russia was sure to become an increasingly important customer, as that country was growing richer. Russia was strongly musical and emotional. So far our exports to Russia had not been large enough to be recorded. British manufacturers in the future must concentrate on making one line in pianofortes. A resolution was passed approving of the sending out of a Commission of Inquiry regarding overseas trade.—(From the *Morning Post*.)

#### THE BACH CHOIR.

The invitation concert given by the Bach Choir at the Royal College of Music on May 22 introduced six new Motets entitled 'Songs of Farewell,' composed by Sir Hubert Parry. The seven-part setting of Donne's words 'At the round corners of the earth' created a profound impression. Another one of the group, a setting of Lockhart's 'There is an old belief,' was also highly moving. The Choir also sang Bach's 'Be not afraid.' Pianoforte solos, played by Mr. William Murdoch, and organ solos, played by Mr. Harold Darke, made up the remainder of the programme. Dr. H. P. Allen conducted.

#### ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC.

At the Chamber Concert on May 25, some beautiful playing was heard in Schubert's A minor Quartet (leader, Miss Pearl Michaelson).

At the concert given under Sir Charles Stanford on June 6 the students' orchestra played Saint-Saëns's 'Danse Macabre' and a Suite made from Mackenzie's music to 'Ravenswood,' which was written many years ago. Miss Hilda Klein played Tchaikovsky's B flat minor Pianoforte Concerto remarkably well.

There were 391 candidates for the A.R.C.M. examination in April, of whom 152 passed.

The Dramatic Class of the Royal Academy of Music, under Mr. Acton Bond, paid its due respect to the Shakespeare Tercentenary by giving in June excellent performances of 'Much Ado about Nothing.'



## LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

QUEEN'S HALL.

An unwieldy programme was presented on May 22. Every item had its interest—but attention cannot be sustained for over two hours. The Overture and Venusberg music ('Tannhäuser'), with the female-voice chorus parts, was the first item, and it was very well performed. The two-part songs for chorus and orchestra, 'Sleepless Dreams' and 'Hey, Nanny No,' by Dr. Ethel Smyth, did not make much effect, although they had been well prepared under Mr. Fagge. The orchestral Suite 'La Mer,' by Debussy, has its moments of unquestionable beauty, but on the whole it did not attract. The chief feature of the concert was the performance of the Dramatic Symphony 'Romeo and Juliet' (Berlioz). This of itself would suffice for one programme. It found the audience weary and left them still more weary. It was a pity that for lack of time the Funeral March, which is said to be one of the best numbers of the Symphony, had to be omitted. We are duly grateful to Sir Thomas Beecham and all concerned in the revival for giving us this opportunity of hearing a remarkable work which is more often read about than performed. It is not likely to be revived very often. The principals were Miss Doris Woodall, Mr. Powell Edwards, and Mr. Frank Webster. The choir had been trained by Mr. Fagge (who conducted the part-songs), and Sir Thomas Beecham was the conductor.

At the last concert of the season, given on May 29, the most notable numbers were selections from Act 2 of 'Le Coq d'Or,' Rimsky-Korsakov, and Elgar's Symphony in A flat, which has not been heard in London recently. Sir Thomas Beecham's reading of the Russian music was striking and exciting. He allowed his temperament full swing. The Symphony also had an exceptionally fine reading, again infused by the conductor's originality. It made a great impression on the audience.

## BEECHAM OPERA SEASON.

ALDWYCH THEATRE.

Fresh from its successes 'somewhere farther North,' this Company began a new season at Aldwych Theatre on June 13 with a notable performance of Verdi's 'Otello.' It was a jar to find that the Company, which is out to forward opera in English, had perforce to sing on this occasion in Italian owing to there being no satisfactory version available in the vernacular. But the music is the thing, so long as you know what the play is all about.

The cast included Mr. Frank Mullings (Otello), Miss Mignon Nevada (Desdemona), Mr. Auguste Bouilliez (Iago), and Mr. Webster Millar (Cassio). A large audience testified its high appreciation of the music and the performance. 'The Magic Flute' and 'Tristan,' both in English, are other works that have so far been performed. In the latter opera Miss Rosina Buckman, who is one of the ablest and most versatile members of the Company, was Isolda, and Mr. Frank Mullings was Tristan. Mr. Robert Radford was an adequate King Mark—the part might have been written for his voice and style. The orchestral parts were well played under Sir Thomas Beecham, although sometimes overwhelming for the singers,—but it may be said that climaxes must be climaxes.

## London Concerts.

LONDON STRING QUARTET.

The London String Quartet has been very active during the last month or two. On May 20 it performed, with Mr. Gervase Elwes as vocal soloist and Mr. Kiddle as pianist, Dr. Vaughan Williams's cycle of songs 'A Shropshire Lad,' Ravel's Quartet in F, and Brahms's Piano-forte Quartet in A, with Mrs. Hobday at the piano-forte. —On June 3, Joseph Holbrooke's early Quartet, Op. 17, was given. It exhibits the composer in a spontaneous mood. —On June 10, Debussy's G minor Quintet and Brahms's F minor Piano-forte Quintet were the leading features. The lighter items were Waldo Warner's Phantasy Quartet in D, Frank Bridge's 'Londonderry Air,' and Percy Grainger's 'Molly on the Shore.' —On June 17, Frank Bridge's fanciful

String Quartet arrangements of 'Cherry Ripe' and 'Sally in our Alley,' and Ernest Chausson's 'Chanson Perpetuelle' for strings, piano-forte, and voice (Mlle. Fernande Pirronay), were given; also Albert Sammons's Phantasy Quartet.

Miss Doris Manuelle brought forward a good programme (all foreign) at her recital on May 24, and showed that she is making great progress as an artistic singer.

A concert was given by the South Hampstead Orchestra, under the direction of Mrs. Julian Marshall, at the Hampstead Conservatoire, on May 25. The programme included some quaint and interesting old Flemish Folk-songs transcribed for orchestra by Arthur de Greef, Dvorák's Legend No. 10 and the Scherzo from his first Symphony, Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, and Elgar's 'Carillon.' The last-named work, in which the poem was dramatically recited by Mr. Charles Fry, had a very enthusiastic reception.

At a remarkable performance of 'The Hymn of Praise,' given on May 25 at the Great Central Hall, Bermondsey, under Dr. J. E. Borland, five hundred children from the local elementary schools co-operated in singing the melody of the Chorale and elsewhere in the work. A truly educational idea!

Miss Chilton-Griffin, a young pianist, made an excellent impression at her first recital on May 25.

Madame d'Alvarez is a great singer. She has an almost vehement temperament, but she makes the music she sings live. She gave a recital on May 30.

The Misses Irene and Una Truman are two of the most industrious pianists before the public. They used their attainments to good purpose at Steinway Hall on June 2, on behalf of Recreation Huts.

Mr. Mark Hambourg drew a large audience at Queen's Hall on June 3, when he gave, with much success, a Chopin recital.

Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch and his family gave an enjoyable concert mainly of old English music at Leighton House on June 8. Viols and virginals were in evidence, to the delight of the audience.

At her song recital given at Aeolian Hall on June 9, Miss Dorice Gay, a new candidate for public favour, showed considerable capacity as an interpreter of high-class songs. Her voice is a light contralto of agreeable quality, and her style is cultivated, confident, and free from exaggeration. One of her best efforts was Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Night,' which she sang movingly. A tendency to vibrato where that agony was not called for and a curved attack will no doubt soon be corrected. Her able teacher, Mr. Charles Phillips, contributed some songs, and a young 'cellist, Mr. Giovanni Barbirolli, showed decided talent. Miss Ethel Bartlett and Mr. German Reed accompanied.

Miss Stella McLean, a New Zealand soprano, made a promising début on June 14. Her voice is not fully developed, but it is agreeable.

We attend Miss Adela Verne's piano-forte recitals with a strong bias in her favour and leave them her willing slave. No pianist we hear gives us such unalloyed pleasure. At her eighth recital, on June 15, she played Bach's Italian Concerto grandly and Mozart's 'Pastorale Variée' exquisitely, and her interpretation of the 'Appassionata' Sonata was superb.

Madame Beatrice Langley (violin) and Mlle. Juliette Folville (piano-forte), with the assistance of Mr. Warwick Evans (cello), brought forward Ravel's Trio at their concert on June 19. It is an important work that deserves frequent hearing for its due appreciation. Some parts puzzle the mind, but elsewhere there is decided charm.

Recitals by Mr. Albert Sammons (violin) and Mr. William Murdoch (piano-forte) have been one of the attractions of the recent season. They have played together in Sonatas by Brahms, in D minor (Op. 108) and Lekeu in G.

Mr. Moiseiwitsch has given a series of recitals recently. He brings forward the finest music, and plays it with great style. His costume is original if not eccentric.

We draw attention to the Handel Commemoration Musical Festival announced in our advertisement columns, to be held at St. Lawrence, Whitechurch (Canons), Middlesex, in the afternoon of Thursday, July 13. This is a church associated with the Duke of Chandos, and Handel.

Mr. H. A. Jebout, the organist of the Parish Church, lectured at Taunton on 'Shakespeare and Music' on June 6, in connection with the Tercentenary celebrations.

## Music in the Provinces.

(BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

### BIRMINGHAM.

We have now entered upon our *saison morte*, and under present depressing conditions it is difficult to foretell what the autumn season may bring forth. For the present, only short reference can be made to musical events that have taken place since our Birmingham notes last appeared.

Miss Paviour, a well-known Handsworth teacher, gave a very successful concert with her pupils on May 23. The proceeds were devoted to relief funds.

In aid of the Fund for wounded soldiers, Mr. Sidney Stoddard gave a concert at the Grosvenor Room on May 31. Our well-known local baritone was assisted by a large number of his pupils, and Miss Katrina Lund, elocutionist and dramatic reciter, participated. Mr. Stoddard himself contributed several songs, and one of the most interesting items was the excellent performance of Orlando Morgan's song-cycle 'In Fairyland' by a number of well-trained vocalists.

The most interesting concert of last month was that organized by Mr. T. Appleby Matthews, at the Town Hall, on June 7, when Elgar's latest choral works—'To Women,' and 'For the Fallen'—were introduced to a local audience. The music had been admirably prepared by the concert-giver, who conducted the performance. Miss Agnes Nicholls sang the soprano solos in both works with intense fervour. Delius's 'Sea-Drift,' along with other items, and some violin solos contributed by Mr. Albert Sammons, made up an admirable although too lengthy programme.

Miss Lena Ashwell's War concert, given at the Prince of Wales's Theatre on June 9, was poorly supported in spite of the appearance of such well-known artists as Miss Maud Percival Allen and Miss Doris Woodall—to name only two in a popular list.

The only vocal and instrumental concert at the Edgbaston Botanical Gardens, given in connection with the summer season's fixtures, took place on June 10, and was specially arranged by Mr. Oscar Pollack. A new violinist, Madame Carl Zimmer, an excellent and well-schooled performer, made her first appearance here with complete artistic success. The vocalists were Miss Emmelyn Walter, Madame Medora Edwards, Mr. George Rollitt, and Mr. Sidney Stoddard. The solo pianist was Miss Winifred Taylor, and the accompanist Mr. Richard Wassell.

The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company appeared at the Prince of Wales's Theatre from June 5 to June 17 in a repertoire of Gilbert and Sullivan's famous operas which attracted enormous audiences.

Several of the principal regimental bands—such as the Coldstreams, the Irish Guards, the Grenadiers—and some of the famous brass bands of Lancashire and Yorkshire, have appeared in our public parks with great popular success.

### BOURNEMOUTH.

There has been a considerable curtailment of musical activity during the past month; but this is always so as the summer approaches, during which season of the year music of the less serious type predominates. A series of Symphony Concerts, however, is provided for those whose tastes demand more satisfying artistic fare than the favourite jingles of the day, and a few visits paid by prominent artists help to keep the flag of high-class music flying. At the Symphony series many interesting compositions have been played, from which we single out the following for special mention: 'Irish' Symphony (Stanford); 'Scotch' Symphony, and Nocturne and Scherzo from the music to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' (Mendelssohn); Tone-poem, 'The Bamboula' (Coleridge-Taylor); 'Unfinished' Symphony, and 'Rosamunde' Overture (Schubert); 'The Roll of Honour' March (Edith Sweptstone); Overture, 'Alceste' (Gluck); and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' Overture (Nicolai). At the third concert of the series Miss Monica Singleton played the Grieg Pianoforte Concerto in promising style, and on June 14 Mr. Hend Wolters, an accomplished member of the Orchestra, revealed much beauty of tone in Max Bruch's 'Kol Nidrei' (for cello and orchestra). Also, vocal contributions have been forthcoming from Messrs.

Arthur Royd, Robert Pitt, and Bridge Peters. A wood-wind item that won ready appreciation was Saint-Saëns's Tarantella for flute and clarinet, which was skilfully handled by Messrs. Jean Gennin and Ferrari (of the Municipal Orchestra).

On May 20 a concert was given by Miss Louise Dale (vocalist) and MM. Louis Godowsky (violin) and Shapiro (pianoforte), and on June 10 Mr. Mark Hambourg again delighted and astonished his numerous Bournemouth admirers. Another strong local favourite, namely, M. Sapellnikov, appeared in conjunction with the Orchestra on June 15 in a 'Franco-Russian' programme, the Russian pianist's principal contribution being the G minor Concerto by Saint-Saëns.

Mr. Dan Godfrey is again announcing a series of competitions for local amateur singers. The material at the first of these, on June 8—for soprano vocalists—more than fulfilled expectations.

A reference to the lamented death of Mr. J. B. M. Camm will be found on page 337.

### CAMBRIDGE.

The University Musical Society has given two concerts this term. On May 10 the London String Quartet played Quartets by Brahms in A minor, Ravel and Haydn in D, and on June 9 the usual choral and orchestral concert was held. The programme was composed of Dvorák's Violoncello Concerto in B minor (Mr. Howard Bliss), Five Folk-songs for unaccompanied chorus by Vaughan Williams, Ballet Scene from 'Prince Igor' (Borodin), and 'L'Arlesienne' Suite by Bizet. The musical result of the year's work has been highly satisfactory, though on account of smallness of numbers, parts of the original programme had to be omitted. At some of the concerts—notably this last one—the attendance has been quite good, and in consequence the financial position is such as to allow the committee to make plans for next year. The Society owes very much to the untiring energy and enthusiasm of its popular conductor, Dr. Cyril Rootham, and to him more than any other man are due the thanks of the members for the manner in which the work has been carried on during these critical times.

The University Musical Club has suffered through lack of numbers. The concerts have, however, been regularly held every Saturday, and provisional plans have been made for next term. The committee feels that it is highly important that the Club should continue its activities, while reducing expenses to a minimum. It has been such a valuable agent in drawing musicians together, and with the suspension of most of the other clubs its need and usefulness have been increased.

The organ recitals that are held every Easter term in Trinity Chapel have taken place as usual. On June 4, Dr. Rootham gave a recital in St. John's Chapel to the French professors who were visiting Cambridge.

On May 25, Miss Margaret Bennett gave a pianoforte recital of works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Bax, Dohnányi, and Debussy.

### DEVON AND CORNWALL.

#### DEVON.

Torquay Municipal Concerts, held in the Pavilion, continue to be of much interest, although the management of the undertaking remains unsettled. Mr. Basil Cameron, conductor of the orchestra, having joined the Army, farewell concerts on May 25 were particularly well supported. M. Sapellnikov was the pianist in Tchaikovsky's Concerto, Mr. Arthur Beckwith, leader of the band, played violin solos, and the vocalists were Miss Carrie Tubbs, Miss Lillian Burgess, and Mr. Walter Hyde. The band played excellently. On June 10 MM. Melsa and Shapiro played respectively violin and pianoforte music, the latter introducing a 'Nocturne' by Allenev, and together they played César Franck's Sonata in A minor and that of Grieg in C minor.

Sir Frederic H. Cowen conducted at Plymouth Theatre Royal from May 15 a week's performance of the Garden scene from 'Faust' by late members of the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company. The Plymouth Orpheus Male Choir sent a party to sing at Devonport on May 24, under the direction of Mr. David Parkes, in aid of a war fund, and on May 26 Sir Frederick Bridge spoke on 'The War and Music' to a

gathering at Plymouth in connection with Trinity College local examination awards. A recital was given on May 31 in St. Catherine's Church, Plymouth, by the organist (Mr. R. Waddy) and members of the choir and friends. Very special interest was associated with a matinee on behalf of Blind Sailors and Soldiers at Plymouth on May 31, when Lady Maud Warrender, wife of Admiral Sir George Warrender, recently appointed to the post, sang for the first time since her arrival, and charmed all hearers by her performance. Since that date she has more than once given the same pleasure to audiences assembled in the cause of charity. A chamber concert, on June 2, was given by MM. Melsa and Shapiro, with the Misses Louise Dale and Ella Mayne as vocalists and Miss Daisy Bucktrout as pianist.

Simplicity was the keynote of the music employed everywhere in the district at memorial services to the late Lord Kitchener. At Plymouth the chief item on June 12, at St. Andrew's Church, was Sir Walter Parratt's anthem, 'O death! how sweet is the thought'; and at the service in Exeter Cathedral Dr. Wood played funeral music by Tallis, Tchaikovsky, and Handel, and the choir sang the service impressively.

To celebrate the Shakespeare Tercentenary at Exeter, on May 23, a choir of ninety voices sang music of the period and Shakespeare songs, and Messrs. Allan Allen and Reginald Moore conducted an orchestra in well-selected pieces. During the week beginning May 15, Exeter Amateur Operatic Society played 'Patience' for charity purposes, Mr. Allan Allen conducting. The chorus was trained by Dr. Ferris Tozer.

Mr. R. Bareham arranged an all-British concert at Tiverton on May 24, when in chronological order works from Purcell to Elgar were given by a choir and orchestra, with violin solos by Miss Ruby Davy and pianoforte solos contributed by the concert-giver. Two chamber concerts were given at Paignton (May 26) and Dawlish (May 27) by a concert-party comprising Mesdames Rizzini and Van Hee, MM. François Siron and Jules Colbert (vocalists), Mr. Joseph Camby (violin), M. Paul Kocks (pianoforte), and M. Lucien Caveye ('cello). The programme was repeated at Ilfracombe on June 1.

#### CORNWALL.

The chief event in Cornwall has been the Diocesan Choral Festival in Truro Cathedral on June 6, when 471 voices from twenty-one parishes sang the evening service by Sir Frederick Bridge and a suitable anthem. The service was modified on receipt of the news of Lord Kitchener's death. Dr. Monk, who conducted, was assisted by three sub-conductors, and Mr. J. L. Carlyon was the organist. The Rev. Precentor Corfe conducted a choral celebration in the morning, when choirs from Redruth, Hayle, St. Day, and St. George's (Truro) joined the Cathedral chorists.

At St. Mark's Church, Sticker, where Mrs. Leggo, the devoted choirmistress, accomplishes much under special difficulties, festival services on May 26 comprised an organ recital by Mr. Wilfrid Hancock and excellent anthem singing by the choir. Saltash Male Choir sang creditably at Torpoint on May 24, under the baton of Mr. A. Penne; Carbis Bay Wesleyan Choir sang anthems and choruses on May 25, under the direction of Mr. H. V. Pearse; Wadebridge Choral Society raised during May funds for War purposes by performances at Port Isaac and elsewhere, and two performances of 'The Holy City' at Wadebridge; Penzance U.M.C. choir, on May 28, led by Mr. Percy Webber, with Mrs. Webber at the organ, sang the cantata, 'Penitence, Pardon, and Peace,' several anthems, and the quartet, 'Shepherd of souls.'

By three entertainments in the middle of May, Newquay Dramatic and Operatic Society, under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Crosby Smith, raised money for charities, and at St. Buryan, on June 1, the operetta, 'A visit to Fairyland,' was performed by twenty juveniles, with Mr. L. Thompson as stage-manager and Miss Nunn leading a small orchestra.

Mr. F. H. Shera, M.A., F.R.C.O., of Bradfield College, will take up the post of Musical Director at Malvern College in September next.

#### LIVERPOOL.

At the annual meeting of the Philharmonic Society, a credit balance of £106 was reported in respect of last season. For the first time since 1909 the Society is entirely free from debt, after providing out of revenue a very considerable sum spent in repairs. Also included in the items of expenditure is a significant reminder of the present troubled times in the extra insurance paid against air-raids. But notwithstanding adverse influences, the financial stability of the Society gives cause for satisfaction.

The receipts on the Subscription Concerts account amounted to £4,952, out of which £3,270 was paid to band, organist, conductors, and principal artists. It is worthy of note that the members of the orchestra received their usual scale of fees, whilst half-salaries had been paid to those who had joined H.M. Forces. The committee expressed the opinion that, thanks to the conscientious training of the choir by Mr. R. H. Wilson, and the efficiency of the orchestra under various conductors of eminence, the artistic reputation of the Society had been fully maintained. The usual twelve concerts were authorised to be given during next season.

The meeting was quite harmonious, although one or two members sounded a plaintive note about the music being too gloomy in character and also too modern. In replying, the chairman, Mr. H. E. Rensburg, confessed that his preference personally lay among the classics. A great many of the ultra-modern works had no message to convey. If people who had nothing to say would only say nothing, what a delightful world it would be. This is a dictum with which most people will agree. The general impression remains that the Philharmonic committee managed exceedingly well last season.

In view of the desirability of cultivating objects of interest other than the all-engrossing topic of 'organs,' the members of the local Organists and Choirmasters' Association did well in paying a corporate visit to the ancient church of St. Helen, at Sefton, near Liverpool, where a beautiful Iona cross in the churchyard marks the grave of Dr. Peace. The old church possesses features of antiquarian interest quite exceptional hereabouts, and is the best example of a pre-Reformation church in this neighbourhood which preserves a fine old rood-screen, at least one notable brass, a double piscina, and some richly-carved bench-ends. During the visit an organ recital was given by Mr. Frank Dibb.

Dr. Walford Davies's short Worcester Cantata 'The Five Sayings of Jesus' received an interesting performance by the choir of St. Mary's Church for the Blind on Whit-Sunday evening. With Dr. A. W. Pollitt at the organ and Mr. Lindop as tenor soloist, the music made a deep impression by its devotional dignity of style and individual note of expression.

#### MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT.

On June 10 the most brilliant season of opera this city has ever enjoyed was brought to a fitting close by the work which has most profoundly affected the cause of musical culture here, viz., 'Boris Godounov.' Remembering the large doses of opera administered to our public (before and during the earlier part of the Beecham season) by the Carl Rosa and O'Mara concerns, the war-time support accorded to the Beecham Company, especially by the less moneyed classes, is beyond all praise. Compared with the Denhof and Quinlan visits in previous years the support of the merchant-prince citizens showed a respectable advance, although Sir Thomas Beecham gently suggested on the closing night that opera on his scale could not flourish without generous recognition from the well-to-do members of society. Still, he was abundantly satisfied with his experiment, and comes again in March, 1917, and if his ideas are allowed to mature Manchester may look forward to opera for eight or ten weeks per annum in the not distant future. In my last message I touched briefly upon one feature which differentiated the Beecham season from all others,—that is to say, scenic art. We have had as good bands and equally good singers from other bodies, but never the combination of all that is best in the plastic and musical arts.

With the possible exception of a couple of scenes in 'Tristan,' the settings were always stimulating to the imagination, appropriately in key with the musical phase



which they accompanied—e.g., the snowy woodland scene in 'Boris' reflected perfectly the character of the sombre persistence of the march-music which pervades that scene, and no praise can be too high for the young Russian artists Vladimir and Violet Polunin, who were responsible for the stage-grouping and lighting as well as for the scenery and costumes. I never expect to see anything more profoundly satisfying on the æsthetic side than their work in 'The Magic Flute' and 'Otello'—subtle contrasts of background and prominent groups, gorgeous masses of rich, glowing colour, as affecting in their way as the riot of variegated bloom in an old-fashioned Cotswold garden. The colour-schemes always avoided the drab and strident notes, and the architectural features of the stage-settings were as pleasing as the colour-schemes. Two master-minds were at work in these departments. The later performances also showed the Company's rich endowment in the matter of assistant-conductors. Was Sir Thomas unable to appear, up stepped Goossens to direct 'Boris Godounov,' or Percy Pitt to lead 'La Bohème' or 'The Magic Flute,' and Harrison conducted 'Pagliacci' from memory, and in 'Romeo and Juliet' appeared to have most of the score in his head. Altogether the impression was established that the policy of 'thorough' obtained from least to highest, in the artistic sphere no less than in the business aspects. The foundation-stone of opera at Manchester has been well and truly laid.

When last I wrote, Verdi's 'Otello' had not been produced; otherwise must it have been linked with 'Boris' and 'Tristan' for its arresting qualities. Sir Thomas Beecham conducted, and is the authority for the statement that on its production at Milan the orchestra had ninety-three rehearsals. He and the Hallé band had only a couple! Yet at the first performance here there were only some half-a-dozen quite unimportant slips, and none of them in the orchestra. This was a handsome tribute to the versatility of the Hallé band, and not less so to the whole company concerned, for we are assured that the preparation of 'Otello' is the most formidable job that Sir Thomas has tackled up to now—the 'King' dramas not excepted,—so the measure of his achievement can be fairly gauged. Verdi's ideal Otello would be equipped after the Italian vocal method, and this cannot be said of Mullings, but to my mind he possesses a greater attribute in the eminently brainy qualities he lavishes on all his work. Ideal vocal method is poor compensation for dull or inept acting in a part like this, and it argues a poor sense of proportion to rave about a tenor singer who is mediocre or worse as an actor, and then airily dismiss a fine actor who cannot quite attain to the vocal stature of the giants of the past. Bouilliez and Nevada both exemplified a greater assimilation of Verdian vocal style, and the lady's art was a perfect foil to the more rugged qualities of the men. I am informed that the later performances, which I was unable to see, revealed in all respects a greater sense of mastery freedom. Bouilliez's study of Iago and of Tsar Boris clearly give him rank amongst the elect of contemporary baritones.

Stanford's 'The Critic' was staged three times, and on the third occasion the composer was present. The reception of the work was not over-enthusiastic. The repertory-going section of the Manchester public knows its Sheridan well; if to this it was able to add some amount of musical culture, it never ceased chortling at Stanford's work. But musical satire such as this can only make a limited appeal at present, and I do not think any but a small portion of the public would speedily get the maximum enjoyment from it. I venture to think that in such a big opera house the necessary intimacy between players and public is lost. In a bijou theatre like the Residenz at Munich, where the Mozart festival operas are played, the atmosphere is quite different; and in our Gaiety Theatre at Manchester I am certain 'The Critic' would run all Christmas and New Year holidays, and be the talk of the town.

The 'Bo'sun's Mate' caught on at once. Few things have indicated so clearly the essential shrewdness and fine balance of Sir Thomas Beecham's judgment than his inclusion of two such works, which were not only samples of contemporary art but exemplified the pioneer attitude of their respective composers in exploiting material hitherto regarded as too unpromising. These works cannot be dismissed without passing allusion to the versatility of some members of the

Beecham Company. What greater diversity is thinkable than Miss Buckman's Butterfly, Isolda, and Mrs. Waters; or Mr. Frederic Austin's Sharpless, Sneer, and Tonio, or the Speaker ('Magic Flute'); or Mr. Mullings in Otello, Tristan, Midas ('Phœbus and Pan'), and Whiskerandos. Messrs. Ranslow and Heather displayed gifts in comic parts that were artistically done in a superlative degree—one mentions these as typical examples, without in any sense singling them out.

Probably amongst those who have been regular visitors to these operas there would be a consensus of opinion that the highest resources of the Company were most convincingly displayed in 'The Magic Flute.' Here we had a Manchester translation prepared by Mr. Samuel Langford, of the *Manchester Guardian* staff, and even the most subordinate part was taken by a distinguished singer. The local supplementary chorus did its most effective work here; on some other occasions it left much to be desired. One can only speak in terms of unmeasured praise of the Beecham chorus; the 'Phœbus and Pan' choral sections were perfectly beautiful, and the opening of Act I in 'Otello' will ever linger in the memory as a splendid example of vivid dramatic work.

The Tuesday Mid-day Concerts are being continued and are well attended. The Rawdon Briggs Quartet, with Miss Pierce, played Schumann's E flat Quintet on May 30; the Misses Truman journeyed from Nottingham on May 16, and played for two pianofortes the Schumann Andante and Variations in B flat, the Bach Concerto in C major, and some Arensky 'Silhouettes'; Misses Bessie Tyas and Ellinger and Messrs. Gerald O'Brien and Foster Richardson, accompanied by Mr. Julius Harrison, gave a most enjoyable series of operatic songs on May 23.

In the Municipal Parks a total of fifty-nine concerts is being given by the following choirs: Albert Hall Choir, Cambria Male-Voice Choir, Failsworth Co-operative Society's Choir, Gorton Male-Voice Choir, Higher Crumpsall Choral Society, Levenshulme Congregational Choir, Longsight Wesleyan Children's Choir, Manley Park Wesleyan Choir, Manchester Clarion Choral Society, Manchester Lyric Glee Club, Manchester Union Glee Club, New Moston Philharmonic Society, North-East Manchester Choral Society, Rusholme Road Congregational Choir, and Stretford Glee Club. Later there will be two concerts by the massed choirs.

#### NEWCASTLE AND DISTRICT.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne Bach Choir under Mr. W. G. Whittaker is still continuing its activities, and on Saturday, May 27, gave an extra concert of British music in the Central High School for Girls. Beginning with Byrd's 'Mass for five voices,' unaccompanied, it continued with Purcell's G minor Violin Sonata and a fine Sonata in B flat for the same instrument by William Babbell. Present-day music included some of the best choral works by representative composers of the modern school. Bainton's Choral Ode 'Sunset at sea,' Vaughan Williams's 'Five mystical songs,' for solo and chorus, Delius's part-song 'On Craig Dhu,' Choral Folk-song arrangements by Bantock, von Holst, Boughton, and Whittaker, were all splendid examples of choral development on British lines and incidentally gave the choir a fine opportunity of showing its mettle. Pianoforte solos by Dale, Grainger, and Gardiner were also included in this thoroughly representative programme. The soloists were Mr. John Vine (vocalist), Mr. James Mark (violin), Miss Annie Eckford (pianoforte), and Miss Edna Steele (accompanist).

At the April meeting of the Northern Section of the I.S.M. Mr. Whittaker read a paper on Bach's Motets, illustrated by the Bach Choir, and at the May meeting Mr. J. E. Jeffries read a paper on 'French organ music,' with illustrations on the Cathedral organ.

#### OXFORD.

With all our rooms of adequate size for musical purposes transformed into auxiliary hospitals, and the parks used for trench work and all kinds of military training, the impossibility of walking through even a college quadrangle without hearing the rather too sturdy voice of the 'officer commanding' with his 'left, right,' 'right, left,' generally



taken at the interval of an augmented fourth, it is hard to think that music breathes freely in such surroundings. But we are loyal folk, and ready to forego anything in order to smash up the Goths and Huns.

On June 6 the Professor of Music, Sir Walter Parratt, gave his terminal lecture in the Sheldonian to an appreciative audience, the subject being 'Choral Preludes since 1750.' The Professor began by saying it was wonderful to record the fact that such great musicians as he was going to mention shortly should have taken an infinity of pains and trouble to surround with the most lovely and artistic combinations the short tunes that Chorals usually are, but that all this good work was very greatly to the advancement of musical art. After Bach's death (1750) there came a great lull in the handling of Chorals for preludial purposes, perhaps from a supposition that Bach had exhausted all that could be done on those lines—'the gap between genius and mere talent is great,' said the Professor:

'Genius will do what it must, but talent may only do what it can.'

However, when Mendelssohn, and later Brahms, came on the scene things improved, for both were great admirers of the old Chorals. The former has used them not only in 'St. Paul' and his Organ Sonatas, but even in some of his best chamber music, while the latter has left many beautiful examples, from which we may perhaps quote the No. 8 of his Choral Preludes, 'A rose breaks into bloom' (in F), as one of the most delightful.

Then, said the Professor, we must think of our own English composers, and the name of Henry Smart comes into the foreground, for not only did he thoroughly appreciate Chorals, but in his organ works he left splendid examples of the most effective treatment of them. Nowadays we have many excellent examples by Sir Hubert Parry, Sir Charles Stanford, Dr. Harwood, and others.

Illustrations from the works of most of the above-mentioned composers were given by Mr. Ley on the organ, and Dr. Allen on the pianoforte, which added greatly to the interest and enjoyment of the lecture. The genial Professor announced that he hoped next term to treat this same subject from the vocal side. This aspect promises to prove quite as full of interest as the instrumental side already dealt with.

On June 15 an excellent concert was given in the Old Music Room (Holywell Street) by M. A. de Greef, the famous Belgian pianist, who has been driven from his home and his property destroyed by the Huns. Starting with Mendelssohn's 'Variations Serieuses,' excellently played, he next gave as a great contrast Schumann's 'Etudes Symphoniques en forme de Variations' (Op. 13), in which the numerous orchestral effects and rhythmic changes were exceedingly well brought out; in fact, it was a splendid effort, and at its conclusion M. de Greef was twice recalled. Chopin's Sonata in B minor (Op. 58) demanded a very different range of technique, but the exponent was everywhere eminently successful, and the quiet and beautiful Largo was charmingly played; while the Finale—though perhaps taken a little too fast—was a marvel of almost everything good in pianoforte playing. M. de Greef received a deservedly warm and enthusiastic reception, and it is to be hoped he may be heard here again in a more adequate concert-room.

The Sunday Evening Concerts at Balliol College have been continued this term, under the able direction of Dr. Walker.

#### SHEFFIELD AND DISTRICT.

The revivals of old music given from time to time by the Sheffield University Musical Society afford a hearing of various forgotten or neglected works which the operations of the larger choral Societies do not find practicable. Not the least interesting of the series was Purcell's 'Dido and Æneas,' performed at the Spring concert of the Society under the direction of Dr. Coward. The pleasure of the performers and audience was of a dual character. They were enabled to study the methods of a great English composer and the idiom and form of a work of the deepest historical interest; and, further, the audience enjoyed a thoroughly excellent performance. As might have been expected, the choir was short of tenors and basses. But a sufficient balance was available to carry through Purcell's not very exacting

technical demands. All concerned may be complimented on seizing the archaic spirit of the work, upon which, however, Dr. Coward with admirable judgment imposed a few of his characteristic touches, though these in no way sounded incongruous. Contrast of mood in the several Acts was effectively secured. The Echo chorus, the Triumphant Dance, the sinister scenes with the Sorceress, and the beautiful Lament stood out by reason of their intrinsic force as music rather than to any disproportionate specialization in their performance. An amateur orchestra, led by Mr. Linfoot, played the grateful score with point and taste. The soloists were Misses Eva Rich, Pansy Moore, Pedge, and Petersen, Mr. W. Burrows, and Mr. Holden. The choir also performed some madrigals by Benet and Morley, and the ladies of the choir sang with especial charm in Weelkes's 'The nightingale.'

CHICAGO.—At the eighth annual Festival of the Chicago North Shore Festival Association, held at Evanston, Illinois, May 29 to June 3, the choir of 600 singers gave an unusually fine reading of Berlioz's 'Damnation of Faust.' The soloists, Messrs. Henri Scott and Morgan Kingston, sang with great expression and dramatic ability. Misses Mabel Sharp, Herdieu, and Barton Thatcher, were satisfactory in the other parts. On Tuesday, May 30, Artists' Night, Miss Helen Stanley (vocalist) and Mischa Elman (violin) were the soloists. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra produced a Symphony by Arne Oldberg, a member of the faculty of Northwestern University. 'La Vita Nuova,' by Wolf-Ferrari, was the attraction on Thursday evening, the work being given in a manner that called forth the highest praise. The solos were sung by Miss Alice Nielsen and Mr. Clarence Whitehill, and in this as well as in the 'Damnation of Faust,' the fine work of the *a cappella* choir showed to great advantage. On Saturday afternoon the children's choir of 1,500 voices sang 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin,' by Cyril Graham, and songs by Schubert, Purcell, and Grainger. Saturday night was Operatic Night, the soloists being Miss Sophie Braslau and Mr. Gogorza. A Cantata, 'The Sea-Fairies,' by Mrs. H. H. A. Beach, for women's voices, was enthusiastically received by the audience. The whole Festival was an unequivocal success, and demonstrated the fact that a choir of this size can be made to sing with wonderful expression and feeling. Dean Peter Christian Lutkin is responsible for the magnificent results attained. The attendance was gratifying and large.

HONG-KONG.—Mauder's 'Olivet to Calvary' was sung at the Union Church during Passiontide by the combined choirs of the Union and Wesleyan Churches. Mr. E. J. Chapman was at the organ, and a good performance was appreciated by a crowded congregation.

HUDDERSFIELD.—Dr. Egglefield Hull gave a concert on May 24, when the following artists appeared: Mr. John Dunn (violin), Mrs. W. H. Vanner (pianoforte), Madame Rina Robinson, Madame Bessie Taylor, Miss Doris Hall, and Mrs. E. R. Benson. The orchestra played Beethoven's 'Egmont' Overture, Elgar's 'Carillon,' and Fletcher's Folk-tune and Fiddle-dance. Two Shakespearean dances were also given to an accompaniment of viols. As a result of the concert £185 was handed over to War Funds.

JOHANNESBURG.—The new organ erected by Messrs. Norman & Beard in the Town Hall was opened on March 4 by Mr. Alfred Hollins. We learn from the *Johannesburg Star* that the brilliant recitalist was at his best, and that a packed audience gave him an enthusiastic reception. Mr. Hollins's chief items were Mendelssohn's first Sonata, the F major Toccata of Bach, and the 'William Tell' Overture. He also played two pieces of his own, written for the occasion, effectively using the glockenspiel and carillon, and he improvised in masterly manner. From an interesting booklet descriptive of the organ we learn that the instrument is a great success, that it contains ninety-seven stops, with a bewildering array of accessories, among which are percussion instruments,—bass drum, side-drum (both with 'tap' and 'roll' actions), and triangle, and that it cost over £13,000.

In our notice of the six performances of 'The Dream of Gerontius,' given at Queen's Hall in May (p. 296, June number), the facts as to the constitution and training of the semi-chorus and the Angelicals were not correctly stated. The semi-chorus consisted of sixteen chorists (four of each part), all members of the Leeds Choral Union, and trained by Dr. Coward, and the Angelicals were a separate body of twelve professional singers (six sopranos and six contraltos) selected by Madame Butt in London, and rehearsed by Madame Butt and Sir Edward Elgar. This body also took part in the performances that were given at Leeds and Bradford.

## Answers to Correspondents.

E. M. P. B.—'A Study of Glinka,' by M.-D. Calvocoressi (pp. 128), published in French by Henri Laurens, Paris, is the only memoir we know of apart from Mrs. Newmarch's article in Grove's 'Dictionary.'

(Other answers are held over or are dealt with privately.)

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